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MY AFRICAN HOME;

OR,

BUSH LIFE IN NATAL.

My African Home

BY

ELIZA FEILDEN

We have been greatly encouraged in our efforts to reprint early books about Natal by the enthusiasm and interest shown in our endeavours by our good friends Daphne Strutt and Donald Stayt. We wish to record our appreciation for the help we have received from these two guardians of Natal's early history.

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FENISCOWLES, DURBAN, NATAL.

Frontispiece.

MY AFRICAN HOME;

OR,

BUSH LIFE IN NATAL WHEN A YOUNG COLONY

[1852-7]

BY

ELIZA WHIGHAM FEILDEN

ILLUSTRATED.

London
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CROWN BUILDINGS, 188, FLEET STREET
1887

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Dedicated

TO MY

SISTERS AND BROTHERS.

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PREFACE.

THIRTY years have elapsed since the simple descriptions in the following pages were written, during five years of active bush life in Natal.

The letters were restored to me on my return to England. I have been induced to publish them, with selections from my journal, in the hope that they may entertain many young friends who have been interested about my "African Home."

E. W. F.

ROPPYNDEN, BURWASH.

October, 1886.

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MY AFRICAN HOME;

OR,

BUSH LIFE IN NATAL.

CHAPTER I.

March 8th, 1852.—This is our seventeenth day at sea, and where has been my journal? Perhaps it is as well I have not kept one; it would have been weary to read, and now I may give a general impression of what is past without the lassitude and drowsiness we have all felt more or less. I am quite mistaken in my expectations of a sea voyage being invigorating and inspiriting, though it may do good in the main after it is over. I expected rest and fresh breezes, but more tired each evening I never felt. It is constant fatigue; all the muscles of the body are in exercise; we have to hold hard to keep our seats steady, and to hold hard to keep our feet steady when we pace the deck, and as these two occupations last the whole day it is pretty hard work, giving one some idea of the labour of the treadmill. I have suffered very little from sea-sickness, only the first day "my dinner tumbled out" like little Henrietta's, without a particle of acidity. On Sunday the captain assembled us all, and read some of the Church prayers, and the 5th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. The sailors and passengers were all very attentive and proper. Amongst the steerage passengers is a very respectable elderly woman, engaged to take charge of a widower's family; he has paid her passage out, her

countenance would be her passport. Then there is a great, fine-looking Scotchwoman, who says she is going out to be married. Alas! for her, she should have secured her husband ere *he* sailed. The man's brother, however, saw her on board, and paid her passage. Of the rest I have learned nothing, and I do not fancy them.

March 12th.—A fresh breeze has filled our sails, and carried us on famously. We passed Madeira—though out of sight—on the tenth or eleventh day and got into the trade-winds a day or two later. We are highly favoured: our fellow-passengers are all respectable and quiet. "Sawbones" is a decent, unpresuming man, in delicate health, which may have been his reason for accepting the passage. He suffers from chronic bronchitis, which he says nothing but change of climate will take away. He has not had much practice on board as yet, beyond mixing a pill or two, but he may be useful by-and-by. Mrs. Wasserman is an Englishwoman, a quiet, subdued, gentle-looking lady, in delicate health. Her husband, a goodnatured-looking German, has fixed on Natal as a likely place to suit his wife, while he may do a little business. They have two children—the best ordered I ever saw—and an active, useful nurse. The children are never allowed to fret, and neither parents nor children ever make a complaint about their food. Not so Mrs. Miller, who is a regular grumbletonian; she has two squalling children—the baby, poor thing, teething—and as there is no space for separation in these small vessels (under 300 tons), the proximity is not particularly agreeable. We think ourselves fortunate to be able to retire to our little cabin on deck, and draw our curtain, and thus feel a retreat. Most fortunately the ladies brought chairs or we should have been badly off, for not a movable seat does the vessel contain, beyond two or three wooden stools without backs.

Our captain is a good-natured man, and anxious to make us comfortable, so we make but few complaints. I could not help complaining of the bread—even Mrs. Wasserman said, "If it were only a little better." I

made my complaint rather cunningly. I said, "Captain, the steward has not had time to knead the bread, now I dare say some of those women can bake well, that great Scotchwoman, for instance, don't you think you could ask her?" "I'll see about it," and, lo! the next baking was a different thing, but the steward had done it. Our food is very fair so far, but it shames me to think how dependent our pleasure is upon our palate. The cooking is greasy, and the meat spoiled in the boiling. We, however, are very well off, having been so helped by all our friends in numerous little delicacies—a pot of Amelia's marmalade and biscuits, and a loaf of bread a fortnight baked from Feniscowles were quite a luxury —a slice received by our fellow-voyagers quite gratefully. As long as Mary's basket had anything in, I would say, "Ask Mary for a biscuit." I am sorry to say some of the sailors found their way to one of our hampers, and two bottles of wine and three of porter have disappeared. We have brought the rest into the cabin and locked them under the sofa. We get roasted potatoes and chops for breakfast, or fish cooked, with eggs, tea, coffee, cocoa, toast, all which sounds very well, and would taste well too, if the cook understood his business better. However, we might be worse off, and maybe before we have done, for this is only our third week, and I don't fancy the preserved meats will be nice, they boil them to rags.

Alas! the three little pigs died, and were consigned to the deep one after the other. The sheep do well; we killed one last week, and have been enjoying mutton, fresh and sweet, ever since. I doubt this sheep is nearly finished. Our primitive larder is easily looked into. It is made under the boat that is fixed from above the cabin door—over our outside drawing-room. The boat thus acts as larder and awning, and the joints hanging over our heads are chandeliers or pictures of "dead game," &c. Occasionally, when the bloodhound "Nero" or my little "Vic" comes this way, I have seen a pocket-knife opened, and a small slice cut off a joint to give to the dogs. I have thought of Gordon Cumming

cutting steaks from the hippopotamus as it fled from his hand!

Our second Monday on board was quite an exciting day. We got up some boxes to examine their contents. None of the passengers are so well off as we are; but we are so well stored we can afford to be generous, more especially as some things don't keep for ever. The first box we opened we found all would keep, so we shut it up again; then we came to Margaret's mysterious box of good things. I could remember nothing about it, except a round of beef which was "not to be eaten till we longed for it," and some cheese; so we opened, and oh! but it was a sight, I won't say for "sair e'en," but for a covetous stomach. Our exclamations greatly amused the good German, who watched with as much eagerness as if it had been his own. "What's this?" cried one. "Oh, beef!" "No such thing, this is a great pie! there's the beef below." It was duly smelt and admired, and declared to be quite sweet and good, but whether a venison pasty, a beefsteak pie, or a porker, we could not decide. We agreed to restrain our curiosity as all was so sweet, and shut it up again till Saturday when we took it into the cabin. Alas! a thick mould had encircled the crust. We pulled away the crust, sent for a dish, and lo! a noble ham came from below! We have our luncheon off it every day, and we give slices to our guests, a real treat. We have not touched the beef yet. We took out one tongue (there is yet another), and the box is filled with delicacies; every one exclaimed at the beautiful and most careful packing, and I have frequently lain on my berth wondering and meditating on all the love and affection that had prompted so much. Dear Mary's untiring fingers, too! I hang my watch in her watchpocket every night, and Mary Stewart's eau-de-Cologne bottle beside it, so pretty with its basket and red ribbon; the useful brush-bag, too, and all its contents. The air-cushion is absolutely invaluable, for with the constant effort to sit steady, the seat becomes very hard. Leyland asked me one day where "those worked cushions" came from.

"Why," I said, "you surely know your own; that one is what my mother was working so hard at to get ready for your head, and this one Mary made for mine." He is sure he never thanked her for his.

March 20th, 1852.—We crossed the line yesterday and Neptune paid us a visit. He came on deck dripping with sea-water, and duly presented himself, bowing low to the ladies, who were on what we call the top of the house, i.e. above the cabin, and reached by a long step to a post, another on to a water-cask, and a third reaches the top. It was well the ladies were out of harm's way, for a scene of riotous fun ensued, and the sailors became half wild with their tricks. The poor doctor made a most gallant resistance; he was chased up and down the vessel, and climbed the rigging with great agility, Neptune after him, and finally became a very lamb in the hands of half a dozen sailors, who soused him well from head to foot, clothes and all. Next came the German, who made no resistance and gave no fun; and by degrees such tricks got played that the two little Wassermans hid their faces and cried, and I felt half inclined to follow their example. Then the deck had to be swept up, and all was quiet once more, and only the ladies and children to be seen on deck; but by degrees one after another reappeared fresh and dry in sundry costumes, and a lot of clothes were seen hanging from the rigging to dry. Leyland pretended he could not get at another pair of trousers, and made me dress him up in fancy costume, of which I attempted a sketch. He was so picturesque, in short white calico skirt or kilt, with short drawers, a blue Garibaldi shirt, red sash, and Indian mocassins, without stockings. Little Archie said, "Mamma, if Mr. Feilden can go without trousers, I think I may too." So his are doffed, poor child. He is a sweet, gentle boy, a very "Oliver Twist," as his mother calls him, but sadly puny. The baby is better and does not squeal quite so much now.

The heat is excessive, and our contrivances for coolness are rather peculiar. I have manufactured a muslin

helmet, and brush my hair all off my face up to a knot on the top of my head. Mrs. Miller is taking my likeness; her own would be a long thin white thread-paper, without either stays or bustle. The gentlemen wear no coats. In the evenings they play at quoits or other games, and later on we sit on the sides of the vessel and look into the glorious and wonderful waters spangled all over with animalculæ and fish charged with electricity as they strike the waters, and resemble a myriad of bright stars below us, as well as those above. Jupiter shines pre-eminent, the silver line of his light across the waters is like that cast by the moon. We have left the Northern star now, but look with interest on those four brilliants forming the Southern Cross.

Last night we were waiting on "the top of the house" to watch Neptune sent off to sea in a blazing tar-barrel, when I exclaimed, "Look at that star on the water, that is too far off for animalculæ to be visible." "That is a fish," said a sailor. Presently it grew more brilliant, then suddenly springing out of the water, made several plunges and disappeared. It was a porpoise. Its colour was transparent green illuminated. Earlier in the evenings many of these great fish are seen unilluminated, playing and plunging, and thoroughly enjoying their bath in the cool sea. One day there was a rush to the end of the vessel to see a whale; another day it was a shark, but a very unsatisfactory view could be obtained of either, nor would the shark approach any nearer for a bait of flesh hung over to lure it.

One day the captain pointed quietly to a little white thing that was sailing past. It was a Nautilus, and presently some dozens—quite a fleet of these tiny little ships—sailed past. These are called Portuguese men-of-war, and are not the beautiful Nautili that have the white transparent shell. Their sails vary in size from an inch to a finger's length, the sail in a crescent, bowing the water; some are white, and some have an edge of rich pink; all are transparent as gossamer in the middle, a long fibrous matter hangs down under the water for ballast. They seemed to be sailing away very fast, but

I found it was we who were passing them, and that they were merely floating in the sunshine.

Only once since we lost sight of the British Isles have we seen land, and that was the Island of St. Antonio, one of the Cape Verde Islands, with mountains 9000 feet above the level of the sea.

Leyland's contrivances for our comfort (I might say for mine, for he can rough it well) are numerous. One day I found a clean towel spread on our little table in our cabin, and quite a feast laid out; one of Margaret's tongues, a pot of marmalade, a saucer with sugar, a plum cake, and some biscuits. Presently the steward brought in two cups of tea and toast, a couple of dear Margaret's eggs, which we think so much richer than the ship's eggs, and we had our tea in private, our curtain shutting us out from intrusion. We are so much better off than the other passengers, not merely in the good things and comforts our friends supplied, but in our cabins being up-stairs. Mrs. Wasserman says, "They look so nice, and we were so stupid as not to take them, we having the first choice!" I agree with her, it was stupid.

March 23rd.—We have had a sad catastrophe on board. The great Scotchwoman gave birth to a child about a fortnight ago; she had not known if there would be a doctor on the vessel, and believed she should never reach Natal, but be buried in the sea, and so she has been, and it was sad to think there was not a mourner except those from pity. She had the mid-cabin all to herself, and the decent elderly woman acted as her nurse. At the end of a week she seemed all right, the nurse left her at midnight, and early in the morning she found her with the death-rattle in her throat. The doctor was quickly with her, but she died almost instantly. The heat was intense, so there was no delay in committing the body to the deep. I found the sailors busy making a shroud of a piece of new sail-cloth, and so soon as ready the captain assembled the sailors, and read the prayers of the Burial Service very solemnly. The ladies, except myself, declined being present. The ship's flags were hung as a curtain be-

tween us and the corpse, which yet could be seen lying on a board decently covered with the Union Jack. During the service the curtain was raised, and at the right moment the body was quietly committed to the deep. The elderly female took charge of the poor baby, but it too has followed its mother. I longed to put my finger on its forehead in the name of the Lord Jesus, but I hope He has received the helpless infant. The poor doctor has taken this woman's death much to heart, and was ill for two days in consequence.

One of our amusements on board is to pretend that the post has arrived, and we bring out some letter of love received before leaving home, and read it together, a great treat; but, alas! where are all those letters kept purposely for the voyage, and at the last moment stowed away to fill some vacant corner in some box not now remembered? We have looked into another box of good things, and find dear Minna's ham so cool and sweet that we shall probably reserve it for Natal, as well as many other articles. The steward is most polite, making a grand bow whenever he brings me anything!

A ship has been in sight, but she proved to be Portuguese, possibly a slaver. She would not speak.

May 1st, 1852.—Beyond the Cape of Good Hope. Two days ago was my dear mother's birthday. We drank her health in every liquid that passed our lips, even once in quinine, and finally at night, opened our bottle of whiskey, and drank it in a good glass of toddy. Mrs. Miller and the captain were still up, so they were called in to share; the steward who supplied us with sugar and water got a little treat too, and our cabin behind the curtain showed quite a cheerful little scene. We get very good bread now, and are either better supplied than at first or we grow more accustomed to the style of cooking. We have eaten six sheep at the cabin table (I fear the last leg has been taken from our larder to-day). The pigs, except one, died. The fowls are as tough as old rabbits. I sometimes suspect they have been killed to prevent a natural or unnatural death, as I saw happen one day, but there is no use

inquiring too strictly into anything eatable on a three-months' voyage. The mutton is deliciously fresh and sweet, and we pick the bones as clean as any dog would do.

By-the-bye, poor little "Vic" has become food for fishes, and I believe it was more lamented over than the poor baby. It was too young for the voyage, and died in strong convulsions.

I am disappointed in finding neither fresh air nor rest as I expected on a long sea voyage without steam. The smells in the little vessel are odious, smoke and soot from the kitchen chimney at times are as bad as from a mill. And for rest! Since we got into the neighbourhood of the Cape we have been "*shyed*" off sofas, and knocked about in various ways all day long. The story of the Golden Goose and its picture in the little story-book came into my thoughts one day, as Leyland and I, with our backs firmly planted against "the house" were balancing off one leg on to the other, poor Mrs. Miller shot past us, Leyland put out his hand and caught her, but slipping, I put out mine and caught him; then came little Archie and caught his mother by the gown, and so we formed a line like the geese, all sticking by the touch. Often have we been jerked off our seats and rolled into a heap on the floor. I got a "Well done" from the captain one day in a squall, for catching two plates on their way to the floor; but we are all growing fatter and rosier during our "winter at the Cape."

The seas during this breezy weather are sometimes magnificent, with their snow-white, frothy foam around the ship, and the great heaving, heavy waves, reminding one of those poetical descriptions of being rocked on the swelling bosom of the mighty ocean. The birds are so different from land birds, they fly so strong and swiftly. But the noble albatross is like a king among them all, its rapid flight is without effort; it sweeps the winds with its long wings, and describes circles, ascending or descending with equal ease and rapidity. It reminds me of a very skilful skater on the ice, cutting spread-

eagles and skimming along, &c. A flying fish paid us a visit one day. It had a dark back and white belly, with large black eyes. It is about the size of a whiting, and its wings are like extended fins shut up, and not otherwise noticeable.

It is surprising how quickly—after the first few weeks—the time passes, and we so very idle, but I sleep from ten to eleven hours every night dreaming, unremembered dreams, but always appertaining to land, so that I am only about half my time at sea. One dream I must write down, it was so distinct and so curious. "Methought a swarm of bees had hived under our bed, and that looking for something one day led me to find them, for though they had been flying about, going and coming till they had accumulated piles of honeycomb, we had never either of us seen or heard them till their work was finished and the honey ready for us. Methought I saw the shells of several bees, as they had cast them (do they so?) sticking against the wall in their wax, but the honeycomb was most of it piled on the floor!!"

On Saturday afternoon, we were watching the lightning playing rapidly behind a large dark cloud almost close to the horizon. It shot about in every direction; the evening was calm and still. I turned to go in, and instantly a tremendous rattling came against the windows, and Mrs. Miller followed with a hailstone fully an inch long, thick and sharp. The doctor followed with another that measured an inch and a half, shaped like a top. After we had examined and wondered, and almost feared, we threw it down the skylight for the nurses to see. The thunder was loud, and the lightning illuminated the sea; it was grandly beautiful. The captain had hard work to get his sails in. He called it a brisk gale, but said there was not wind enough to call it a storm. The weather has been much more enjoyable and wholesome in the neighbourhood of the Cape, but our only seats on deck are the sides of the vessel, with one arm outside to hold by. Our chairs have been lashed to the mast in the cabin for ten days, and the deck gets too much sea to sit on its floor. Perched up on the

sides, however, we look into some of the wonders of the deep, and the rich rolling, foaming, and heaving of its waters are truly magnificent, and raise the thoughts in wonder and praise to the great Creator.

May 4th.—We had a splendid run from the Cape to Natal, and the cry of "land" to-day sent us all running out, since which the outline of the long range of hills has been constantly becoming clearer. The sun set gloriously behind them, and red golden clouds threw a rich glow over the whole. An inspiriting sea breeze, with famous white waves, rendered the scene quite delightful. The flags and pennants were made ready to wave in the breeze, and we passengers busied ourselves with putting up our various goods and chattels, so as not to be delayed in landing.

It was late when we went ashore. A gentleman rowed us across the Bay of Durban in a small boat, with a brilliant moon overhead. We landed and walked through a lovely garden that I was told belonged to my husband; we have named it "Pazulu," a Caffre word meaning "on high," and by adding another, "Tala Pazulu," it makes "give thanks on high," for there we first set foot on land after a three and a half months' voyage. It was disappointing to find we could not live there, for the garden was exquisite, and filled with fruits and flowers. Some grand old trees were in it, that would take three people to stretch round their trunks; they called them the fig-tree. Another walk through this garden next day made me still more regret that our house was not there; the view over the bay was charming. It is a rich garden, already in a high state of cultivation, it being used as a market-garden, with beautiful flowering shrubs. But the tenant claimed a right to remain a little longer, and he was not one to forego it.

CHAPTER II.

ON arriving at Durban, Port Natal, our first business was to set our house in order and examine into the state of our affairs left in the hands of agents, when a mist of confusion, fraud, and neglect came to light, and I don't know which proved the worst, the men who got us into trouble or those who pretended to get us out. Between them we were half ruined, but I do not wish to write more than necessary of these bad people.

The little red brick house I was conducted to that memorable night of landing was clean and cheerful, and looked like rest and comfort. A hall, or, as the ancients called it, "prandinium," ran through from front to back, out of which opened four rooms: a parlour, with bedroom opposite, a servants' room and storeroom opposite. Our kitchen was a small building outside, in which our Caffre slept, as is the fashion of this young colony. A nice piece of ground at the back to be made into a garden. In front is the road, and beyond a bare, swampy-looking plain, spotted here and there with clumps of wild trees. Occasionally a great covered Dutch wagon might be seen, with its team or "span" of twelve or fourteen oxen, toiling across the distance, its driver, with his very long whip, walking alongside; or a Caffre would be seen with a tray on his head, carrying his load to the barracks or elsewhere.

During the first ten days the house was kept for me by a respectable man and his wife, who had made all ready for us, and I had nothing to do but pay the bills; but after that the wife told me they could not stay, and she had been inquiring for a servant for me, and that she had heard of a nice girl, whose chief fault was her youth,

and she was coming to see me. I liked the girl's appearance and engaged her, though little more than fourteen years old. She was the eldest of a large family of children, her father was ill, and her mother had gone through a great deal of trouble and sickness. Poor "Jane" used to tell me of the struggles they had gone through in an artless, simple, and interesting manner, and we soon became great friends. Trials at home had made her older than her years, but she had still much to learn, and so had I; and many a good laugh we had together at our experiments in the kitchen, and the making of bread. Poor old Gudgeon, whom Leyland had taken out with us as a sort of Jack-of-all-trades, was a great help in these departments. He knew a good deal; but he was a sad, dirty fellow if left to himself, and so much given to drinking that he finally became quite a nuisance. He came to me on the Queen's birthday, and asked for something in which to drink her health.

"I think, Gudgeon, you've been doing that already."

"To be sure I have, and will again," and he seated himself on a chair in the hall.

"Go away, Gudgeon, I shall give you nothing. Set off with you directly."

"I'll not stir till you give me something to drink the Queen's health in."

"Go off at once; I shall give you nothing," said I, half afraid of the drunken man.

"Will you give me nothing? then here goes!" and he flung out of the house, tore up the rails that surrounded the garden, and disappeared for a day or two. Some one saw him lying asleep on the roadside next day. Many a struggle had we with poor Gudgeon, but he was so honest, hardworking, and useful when sober, and always came back so penitent after a drunken fit, that he was invariably tried again. "Jane" liked him better than a Caffre, and we got on very well for a time.

The climate of Natal is delicious in its cooler season, reminding me of winter in Naples. The manner of life

is simple and natural in the country, and suited my tastes very well, but I would not recommend many of my friends to emigrate to a young colony. Everything has to be made out of the ground, literally in the sweat of the brow; importations are all dear, labour difficult, and more than half the early settlers are ruined. All have extreme hardships to struggle with. It is they who arrive after the colony begins to rise who thrive on the foundations laid by the others. Worst of all are those sharp, clever, unprincipled men, who are ever on the watch to inveigle the unwary new comer into some plausible scheme to pick his pocket, and it would require a very suspicious character not to fall into the trap. Many a trap did we fall into.

June 17th, 1852.—We rode out to see our farm of "Feniscowles" one day quite in gipsy fashion; I on a rough, sorry jade of a beast that could scarcely keep pace with Leyland on foot beside me. The farm is beautifully situated, reminding me of some of the highlands of Scotland; not mountains, but wooded hills, and fields barren for want of cultivation. A great deal is bushland and must be cleared, which is immense labour, but everything seems to grow easily and rapidly. During great part of our road out we had views of the Bay of Durban behind us, and a splendid view of it from the top of the garden at the farm, the beautifully wooded Berea stretching around from side to side, and the Bluff shutting the bay out from the Indian Ocean, like the embrace of a pair of arms. The noble view from parts of the estate extends for a great distance on every side over sloping banks, and wooded hills, and valleys; but, except the bay and ocean beyond, not much water is visible. This lovely spot was destined to become my home during the five years of my sojourn in Africa. My husband cut a road through the bush, which formed a continuous triumphal arch for at least a mile, the richest flowering shrubs and perfumes on each side meeting overhead, and lovely creepers, intertwined with flowers and wild fruits, hanging down. A ride through this path by moonlight was truly romantic, the

strong lights and shadows, and the rough road for the horse's feet, stumps of trees cut down not quite level with the road, and occasionally a peculiar growl or howl, which we knew to be that of the tiger or panther, made it rather nervous work.

One of the farm Caffres came to Leyland the other day saying he should like to wear clothes. He was promised some if he continued to work, and so he has got a shirt and a pair of white linen trousers, and looks a very smart Caffre. The shirt he wears in form of a smock frock, but the trousers he soon discarded as too confined, so nature's own dark, well-fitting, and shining boots show conspicuously under the smock-frock. The Zulu Caffres are really an intelligent-looking race, shrewd, keen at a bargain, cunning, and lazy. On a nearer acquaintance with their ways and persons, I am glad we can do without them for household use. They rub their bodies with any kind of grease to protect them from insects and sun; the scent of a Caffre is perceived from afar. A dirty, rough cotton blanket is their usual wrap. I much prefer them in rude nakedness with a sort of sporran hanging before and behind, their thick dark polished mahogany skin shining in the sun. They look quite manly with firm, erect step, and an air of careless freedom.

As we went out to Feniscowles we met some Caffre women with gowns on, probably from some mission station. They were carrying Caffre gooseberries for sale. We stopped them, bought two baskets full for ninepence, and with some difficulty, and a good deal of laughter, made them understand where we wished them to be taken and left. Neither of us possessed a pencil, but with a pin Leyland pricked his name on paper, and the word "paid." The women had two miles or more to carry them, and when we got home in the evening we found them there all right. Three days after these women came with more, which I also bought, and struck up a kind of friendship with them, and made them understand I would buy fowls from them occasionally. We can buy a fowl for sixpence, and a few days' feeding

women / christianity / men

and fattening make it ready to eat, and very good too!

"Jane" knows a few Caffre sentences, which are useful in trading. She is a nice girl, but wants order sadly, putting things anywhere to be out of the way for the moment. We have a famous cupboard for china and silver, but I have to look into it daily myself. Had I to choose again, I would change the nature of a good many of the articles we brought, which are simply useless here, whereas an untinned saucepan or common brown earthen mug is scarcely, if ever, to be had in Durban. I am told the Caffres occasionally bring wooden bowls of their own cutting to sell. They know the value of shillings, sixpences, and sovereigns—other moneys confuse them, and they will sometimes give five threepenny bits (which coin is abundant here) in exchange for a shilling. Many of the Caffres are rich. They buy cattle and wives. Our young Caffres save up their wages to purchase cows, and a certain number of cows will buy them a wife. As they grow richer they increase the number of their wives, who do all the work required at the craals, the last or lowest wife, I believe, always taking the hardest work. The man seems to do no work about the craal, so far at least as I have yet learned. They are very jealous of intruders in their craals, which are built (if I may call it building) in a circle, looking like so many bee-hives, with a hole about as large in proportion, through which they creep in and out. Each wife has her own, and each one bears her share of the burden. The men are lazy, self-indulgent fellows. They enjoy their easy state of barbarism too well to become easily Christianized; Christianity, being a religion of self-denial and moral restraint, strikes at the root of all their sensual enjoyments. Christianity says, "Up and be doing;" but their feelings say, "Sit still; what good do we get by exertion? We are comfortable as we are here lying in the sun, chewing tobacco; what's the use of making ourselves uncomfortable?" Yet they can work if made to do so, and a white man standing by to see they do not sit down and idle.

A Caffre brought me a fine, fat young buck one day, for which I paid him *2s. 6d.* Butcher's meat is very cheap, 2½*d.* a pound. Other things, which are imports, are proportionately dear. The beef, however, is fearfully tough; mutton, which is dearer, is only occasionally to be had.

June 22nd.—We gave a little dinner-party to some gentlemen. Being my first effort at a party, I of course felt a little anxious for the result, considering my English experience, and Natal apparatus and assistance; two bars over a wood fire, the baker to roast our mutton and bake our tart, Gudgeon and Jane to do all the rest, while I was as busy as a bee in the house, getting out glass, china, dessert, tea, coffee, and arranging to make the waiting as easy as possible. I was greatly amused when Jane brought my coffee into the withdrawing-room. I said to her, "And the venison collops, Jane—we forgot them?" She laughed, and replied they were left in the kitchen by mistake, and when Gudgeon discovered the omission he said, "Well, I'm sure they didn't want 'em." We had fish and soup, removed by fowls and ham, and a leg of mutton, a tart and pudding, cheese and salad; a dessert, that would have cost something in England, from our garden at Pazulu.

We shall not give many dinner-parties, however, for it knocked me up, and there is not much either of pleasure or profit. A chatty, old sly lawyer told me with a knowing smile that I should not take so much trouble with my dinners after I had been some time in the colony. He seemed, however, fully to enjoy his share in the feast. I fancy old Gudgeon must be rather witty, for I cannot always make Jane hear when I call, and when she does come in, she has an evident joke on her smiling face.

The mails at this time were very irregular. After a three months' voyage, we had six weeks on shore before a chance either of receiving or sending out English letters. Two steamers were afterwards put on to carry the mails between Natal and the Cape, but these were again taken off to be sent to the Crimea, where they were sunk.

July, 1852.—This is our winter season. The weather has been very cold, but still bright and clear. As we have no fireplace in the house, I sit with my shag cloak and fur boots on all day, and when in the hall I add my bonnet. The African sands are blowing; I am surprised to find so much wind, with so hot a sun as prevails. Perhaps that keeps the place healthy. There was a fearful thunder-storm last week. Our pumpkins had hailstones in them, like the grapes in the Vorarlberg on a similar occasion once. We expected the windows to be smashed, but they stood it all. The thunder rolled incessantly, while scarcely an instant existed between the flashes of lightning; the rain was in torrents, and filled our great watercasks, hitherto empty. The storm lasted four hours. There was not a shutter in the house; but, though awestruck, I was not frightened.

The soft sand upon which the town of Durban is built is a great drawback, the feet sink into it at every step, boots and stockings get lined with it, and it may be easily shaken out when they are taken off. The houses seem rather slightly built, with very few fastenings to keep out housebreakers. These, however, are never heard of, though there are plenty of cheats and rogues. The Caffres will take a knife or such-like thing, which would be useful to them, but only occasionally. White servants are more to be dreaded, and in my after experience I found it so, and worked with my own hands rather than have them much about me. If the Caffres could be *really* Christianized in heart and head, as well as civilized, and made to feel their responsibility as placed on this earth for a purpose, with immortal souls, they might become a fine people; but never, until God's own time, will that happen by the aid of man or missionary. Their conversion under the present system is altogether *ideal*, and in many cases only serves a purpose. They are not a simple, innocent, trusting people, to follow where they are led. If their passions were roused the men would be powerful, and the women energetic, their acts probably without restraint. At present they seem content to bask in the sun, and work when put to

it, but they are very independent. They believe the white race to be stronger than they; and here the missionaries are at fault, telling them that white and black are equal, whereas it can only be in brute-force that they are so, until they are morally raised as a nation by education, and the cultivation of mind and the arts and sciences. They have little if any idea of God, and so long as they have their appetites satisfied, they care as little. Some of them appear to venerate or to fear snakes, which they will not kill.

About this time, Jane went home for two days to see her sick mother, and returning early in the morning before the dew was off, and passing through a swamp, she caught cold, and was speedily laid up with a kind of rheumatic fever. And now old Gudgeon shone forth in his best; he became housemaid, cook, and waiter, as well as sick nurse. I could not exert myself to do much, and to make matters worse, became ill, and gave premature birth to a child. A nurse was difficult to find, and my kind husband undertook the place of watching me; while a kind neighbour, the gunsmith's wife, living at the end of our garden, came in several times a day to attend to me, bringing her own young baby of a few weeks old, and placing it in a chair while she did so. After I recovered I used to go and sit with this kind neighbour; she had been one of the needlewomen of London, and had made twelve gig shirts for eighteen pence. She was married, and "it helped the rent in very bad times;" she sewed finer work also, for which she was better paid.

Poor Jane got soon better, but the doctor said she was too delicate for service, and had better be sent to her friends, and so we lost her. Old Gudgeon nursed her tenderly as if she had been his own daughter; one night my husband, hearing a stir in Jane's room, thought she might need assistance, and pushing open the door to inquire, stumbled against Gudgeon's head. "He thought Jane was very ill, and might need help in the night, and so he had brought his mattress and laid it at the back of the door to be at hand!" Poor Gudgeon

rather enjoyed the importance our illnesses gave him. A lady called one day—Gudgeon opened the door, and with a majestic wave of the hand, said, "You can't see her, you can't see her," bringing blushes to the lady's cheeks, when he bethought himself, and explained, "she's ill, ma'am."

I became indeed very ill, and the doctor found a nurse, not a professed nurse, but one who had nursed her husband off and on, through nine months of low fever, and to her incessant and skilful tender care, almost more than to the doctor (so he said), did I owe, with the blessing of the Almighty, my recovery. Four weeks I lay with a raging fever, my husband scarcely leaving the house for half an hour at a time, but I got well at last, and found that a nice little wooden house was being erected on the farm at Feniscowles, to which we were to remove so soon as it was ready. Gudgeon was so overjoyed when told I was getting better, that he went off and got drunk; he said he did not mean it and was forgiven, and one day, my door being open, I spoke to him as he was placing luncheon on the hall table, his shoulders hitched up, and he became very busy in a moment, and my nurse, Mrs. Brendon, told me that he murmured, "I'm not to come near you, for fear I hurt you." He had been told he would make me ill again if he were not more careful in his behaviour. Where he gets drink is a mystery, for he is never entrusted with money; perhaps his ready wit, and the laugh he can create, procure him a glass of brandy at some low store in the town.

A few days after this, an officer with his wife and little girl landed at Durban on their way to Maritzberg; they had been acquainted with Leyland in England, and having no lodgings in the town, he brought them to our house from Friday to stay till Monday. In a colony you are never expected to send any one away, and visitors are easily accommodated. I was in bed, so of course could take no part in the arrangements. Jane had gone home to her friends, and poor Gudgeon had been sent off again through his incurable drunkenness.

A married couple, who were to live in an outhouse, were engaged as servants to come on Saturday, and meantime my nurse, Mrs. Brendon, and my husband exerted themselves to make all as comfortable as circumstances permitted. Mrs. S. and her little girl slept in Jane's little bed, my husband had a mattress on the floor of the store-room, while Captain S. stretched his great form on the bare boards of our parlour, wrapped in his cloak, a better bed than he would sometimes find in the bush up the country where he was going to hunt elephants and other wild animals. Leyland, in his pity for Mrs. S., half proposed that she should remain a few days, while her husband rode up to Maritzberg and got a comfortable house or lodgings for her, but when I found she was near her confinement, I said she must go with her husband for we could not afford to have another to nurse just then, and so they left on the Monday.

The new servant was very efficient for a time, but her husband was almost useless ; as I began to get better she amused me with stories of life "up the country," where they had been trading with a wagon. As my husband had a cattle-farm in that country, and had had very bad news of the cattle's unproductiveness and deaths, the woman rather startled us by the tale she told. She said, "They'll kill an ox, or let the Caffres do it for the sake of the hide, and four Caffres will eat that ox up in two or three days, and when it comes to be asked for, 'it has died,' but there's nothing to show for it, and the money is in the man's pocket. Nobody can prove it, but such is known to be the fact, and one woman quarrelling with her husband went and informed against him."

August, 1852.—Letters from England! Oh what pleasure! the mail has just come in bringing May and June letters all at once, and a box is announced for me; I dare not hazard a guess at the nature of its contents, but much I know there will be of sisters' and a mother's love, and some enviable letters that seem to be locked up in a cage! When will they be delivered? Ha! here they are, such lots of letters!

We have been reading them from twelve at noon till candles came, and one was saved for the next day, and I went to bed exhausted with excitement and pleasure.

Excitements seem frequent here; a fire in the town was gently announced to me, and presently I discovered it was within a few hundred yards of us, and thatched houses between, so it was well the wind blew the other way and did us no damage. Leyland was active in subduing it.

We have had three days of Sirocco wind! We breathed heat. These were followed by rain coming down in torrents, and nearly washing people out of their houses. The spouts to the water tubs sounded like waterfalls, and the frogs croaked and screamed in the most extraordinary manner. Then all became bright again. The common in front of our house is sometimes rendered very picturesque by the outspanning of a great wagon, with its team of twelve or fourteen oxen. The party bivouac on the ground, lighting their fires, and transacting business. The natives, too, look fine, independent, strong fellows, stalking across the grass with their chins up, snuffing the air, their arms swinging, and long, bare mahogany legs striding one after the other. They are an idle, luxurious race, basking in the sun, and working only when they want food or money. They may be veritable descendants of Ishmael for aught I know, a wild nation living by their bow.

VIEW FROM OUR HOUSE AT DURBAN, NATAL.

CHAPTER III.

October 8th, 1852.—Being a particular anniversary, we made holiday of it, and rode out to the farm. The day was charming, but hot. We arrived about noon and dismounted at our new house. Two naked Caffres were sitting in the rafters stitching the thatched roof. The house is high and dry, a great point during the rainy or hot season. A wooded hill lies at the back, sheltering us from high winds, and as yet we must mount a very steep hill to reach the place, after passing through a verdant vale. We unpacked our luncheon, laid out our refreshments, and took a turn to see what was going on, while Mrs. Smith, the farmer's wife, killed and cooked a chicken and some rice for us. We have plenty of poultry, pigs, and cows, but they are tormented by the wild animals, and the calves get sadly killed and eaten by the tigers. As for fruits, vegetables, and flowers, you have only to put the seeds and young plants in the ground and they grow. There is no end of season in Natal. I have eaten pineapple from our garden in the winter, but its flavour is better in the warmer weather. The papaw is a beautiful fruit and tree, the leaves grow at the top, rising over the stem in shape like a coronet (up which the fruit clusters like small pumpkins), forming a shade like an umbrella. This fruit has been introduced to the colony by Mrs. Bowen, an old Welsh lady, who lives all alone on her property near to Feniscowles, and we became very intimate with her. The banana is a fine fruit, superior to that produced in hot-houses in England; to be enjoyed it should be eaten like a slice of bread, and not

divided into small bits to go round the table as one sees it done in England sometimes. There are not many native fruits, most are imported, and all seem to suit the soil and climate.

The native flowers are very exquisite, and in great variety and luxuriance, with the waxy look of hot-house plants. A white lily at this season blooming is the perfection of beauty. I have one in a mug with sixteen heads of flowers shooting out from their stem like a plume of court feathers. The lily is white, with a rich and delicate pink stripe down the centre of each petal, the broad green leaf hanging down over the jar to the ground is splendid.

As to birds and insects, the air teems with them. Butterflies in all their beauty, dragon flies, and occasionally a swarm of locusts will fly over the crops, settle on them and destroy, as in the days of Pharaoh. Ants of all sizes and shades: The white ant, the great enemy of the colonist, devours anything it can penetrate in the shape of wood or paper. Alas! for our books, which I had kept in such good order. When we returned to England we packed them carefully in their large box, to follow us; half only arrived, in a mutilated state, nibbled all round. An army of white ants had entered up through the floor, made a hole in the bottom of the box about two inches large, and entered from below, eating upwards, and were never discovered till the box was half empty; when disturbed the army drew off and disappeared as it had come, not one remained. Fleas and ticks are another nuisance. Ticks are tiny insects which bury themselves in the skin and live there on your blood, unless you pull them out. Larger ones —perhaps a different kind—torment cattle in the same way, and I have seen the fowls at a wayside inn rush out on the approach of a waggon, and jump up under the oxen to pick out the ticks, which were the size and shape of large bugs. I made a little sketch, while at the farm, of our new house; I seated myself on a bare fence to escape insects, but on jumping down at Leyland's call, I turned to get my parasol and saw a creature like

a leech, with a thousand feet, creeping up to my seat. They call it a millepède.

Our new house stands upon legs or posts, we can see under it and might possibly creep under if we chose. There are only three rooms at present, parlour and bedroom, with a garret above to have a stair up from the little entrance, and in this our guests—when we have any—must be content to sleep! A wide verandah surrounds the house, a most important addition in this hot climate.

The news of the gold-diggings in Australia, with the rumours of the Caffre War and its fears, have paralyzed the place for a time, and half-crazed the people, who, having lost money in Natal and found hardships, think how delightful it would be to pick gold off the ground, or earn twenty shillings a day as shepherds in Australia; so near a hundred have sold up and sailed; among them are scamps, idlers, debtors, drunkards, and husbands flying from the evils at home, to find greater abroad most likely. One man was so afraid his wife would find out he was going, that he left his certificate of being a discharged soldier behind him. The vessel they are gone in is very small; the steerage passengers are stowed like slaves to sleep, three in a berth, I am told, divided from each other by boards.

A wreck up the coast, with accounts of cargo lying high and dry, induced Leyland to go with Lloyd's agent to the scene, 110 miles' ride along the coast. It was a wild journey; sometimes their horses had to swim the rivers, sometimes they were detained by swollen waters, and sleeping on the bare ground or in Caffre huts for ten nights, and all for nothing. Arrived at the scene of the wreck, everything was washed away but the ship.

November, 1852—Another illness has made my husband threaten to send me back to England, lest he lose me altogether, but I mean to try living up at the farm first, for our Durban house, which is built on sand, stands in water after every severe rain, and there are swamps all around. After two or three days' rain

we are nearly on an island. The workmen are so dilatory at our little house at Feniscowles that we resolved to take it by storm, so we chartered a waggon with a few necessaries, mounted our horses, and prepared to set out, Leyland carrying a spare saddle on his arm. The farm is only four miles out, but the atmosphere and scenery quite change the character of the country. It forms a part of the Berea, or wooded hill, that stretches round the bay.

Our white servants were leaving us; we had had a narrow escape of a well-spoken Scotchwoman from Drummond Castle, so we engaged a fine, strong, tall Caffre girl from the missionaries, called "Louisa." She understands English *pretty* well, and appears to be willing and quick, but I should not like her to put her hands in the bread till I can teach her to be thoroughly clean and nice in her habits, so I must be the bread-maker for a time. She shrugs her shoulders, but does the thing I tell her, but will not obey Gudgeon, who has managed to get taken back. Before we set out from the bay, Louisa came into the parlour in her pink print and squatted herself on the floor, looking very resolved. She "would not go with Gudgeon to the farm," she would "go with missis." I explained that we were riding and would go too fast for her; then she would follow, but not with Gudgeon, to whom she has taken a dislike. How they arranged I know not, but both made their appearance. She "was sorry there would be no school." I undertook to teach her, so as soon as she had washed up she brought her Zulu Genesis, and I heard her read her chapter; I afterwards found she understood my reading of Zulu better than her own, though I only knew what I read by consulting my English Bible.

Another pupil is given me. The farmer's little Margaret is a book-dunce, though a most useful little housewife, and I have undertaken to try to teach her to read, but from some natural impediment she has difficulty in speaking plain.

The fresh country air and life did me good directly, and I soon grew strong. We surprised the workpeople,

who were not over pleased to see us, by telling them we were going to occupy at once. Shavings were on the floor, no glass in the windows, none yet to be had in the colony, except in use, so we tacked calico inside the frames for glass, and except that it shut out the view, it answered sufficiently for the rest. The windows—one at each end of the room—opened in the centre from top to bottom, and one was generally left open, the wide verandah protecting us from the heat of the sun. We have fairly taken possession, much to the disgust of the workmen, who were enjoying the country at pleasure and leisure. Now they will have to get on a little faster. The views from the windows are pretty. There is a site I should have preferred for the house on the top of the hill, but Leyland feared we might be blown away there, and we are quite near for the walk. That view is grand, extending as far as the eye can reach, and bounded on one side by the Indian Ocean, at the entrance to which lies calmly embosomed our peaceful-looking Bay of Durban. Balsams, gumcistus, convolvulus, and all sorts of flowers grow wild all around, bursting out from the sides of stones or shrubs, creeping up the bushes, and hanging about in great beauty and luxuriance. Mrs. Smith cooked our dinner the first day ; we breakfasted under a tree, and instead of tea I got a little soup warmed up. Our kitchen has yet to be put up ; it is a small iron house we have, and until it is ready we must cook under the trees.

My Durban white servant came to us for a few days, but some heavy rains drove her away, and we were left with only Louisa and Gudgeon. Gudgeon *would cook* and plagued us ; Louisa was willing, but knew nothing. I many a time wished I had spent an hour a day in the kitchen in England, for I felt as ignorant of cooking almost as Louisa. She is a nice creature, but wilful, and the difficulty of teaching her to understand in English first what she is to do, then how she is to do it, and lastly, seeing that she does it, is very fatiguing. She comes to me, "What me do now?" Her mind is active, and her body strong. If we can only have

patience with her she may turn out a fine creature and learn to be very useful, but you cannot reason with one of another language, who has no ideas upon daily duties. She reads pretty well in Zulu, and opens my English books with a sort of longing look. She opened my little sketch-book, I turned to where some figures were squatted. "Oh, Caffres!" she cried, with a merry laugh. I pointed to herself under the tree, and Gudgeon, but she did not think it like her.

She came to me on Saturday, "You know me want?"

"What do you want, Louisa?"

"Me want go church, all man love God; go church, not work Sunday."

"Quite right, Louisa, you shall go to church. I cannot walk so far, so we have church here to worship God. You must come soon back at night."

"No! me stay all night, me go church, me not work, God rest." So I suppose we must help ourselves on a Sunday in future.

She was back before seven in the morning on Monday, having walked from the station, a distance of six or seven miles. She said the service was part in English and part in Caffre, and they taught her to read. She would like to learn everything, provided I go with her, and do as much as she. I asked if she would like to teach her people. She replied, "Yes, but they not like to learn." When she brings her "Genesis" and seats herself on the floor at my feet, I am reminded of the Eastern saying of the maid sitting at her mistress's feet. It sounds very pretty as a picture, a dark shining skin and eyes, a pink frock, and the Bible in her hand; but in reality she is a great, clumsy, wallopping young woman in rags, though she can sew well. But there is something nice about her, and when she can understand us better, we may be able to reason with and teach her many things. She has taken a great fancy to my sketch-book, and is always turning over the leaves.

We have papered our sitting-room and the vestibule with the pretty white paper we brought from England; they look quite nice and cheerful. Our bedroom must

wait, for these work-people are so dilatory. We have got a famous set of shelves put up—instead of pantry and wine-cellar—to make us a little comfortable, for this room has had to serve us for everything, bed-room, pantry, larder, and store-room. If a visitor should arrive he must be received among the shavings and workmen or under the trees ! But all discomforts we feel trifling in comparison with the purer air and beautiful scenery, while the kitchen under the trees with our dark maiden, the happy ducks and fowls picking about, are quite romantic and picturesque. Moonlight is very beautiful here—the clear, calm, starry heavens above, reading us countless lessons upon the magnitude of creation, and the wonders of the unseen worlds.

We have a small hut and garden in view, half-way up the hill leading to the farmer's house. At first it was an eyesore, a blot in the landscape, and I thought of the story of the rich man who wanted to displace a poor man's ugly little cottage, but not being able to do that he planted it all around with pretty shrubs and trees, and made it a beautiful feature in his landscape. I thought we must do the same, for the man has a seven years' lease. However, I find it a cheerful look-out ; the little boy plays about all day, and their garden is the footway to Smith's house, so that life keeps moving upon it. Moreover, a promise from my husband of a few sugar-canes has set the man to dig, and it begins to look a different place already. The man is a carpenter by trade, and his wife is an industrious stayer-at-home, who will wash a few things for us occasionally, so that I am more than reconciled already.

I have a very interesting neighbour in Mrs. Bowen, an old lady of seventy-five years, who lives alone in a small house in a most lovely situation, with the Bay and Durban as a foreground, and a rich garden in which she spends great part of her day. She is the widow of an officer, and has travelled and read a great deal. She went out to South America with her younger son to join another son there, found he was dead, and after some stay at Rio Janiero, she and her remaining son

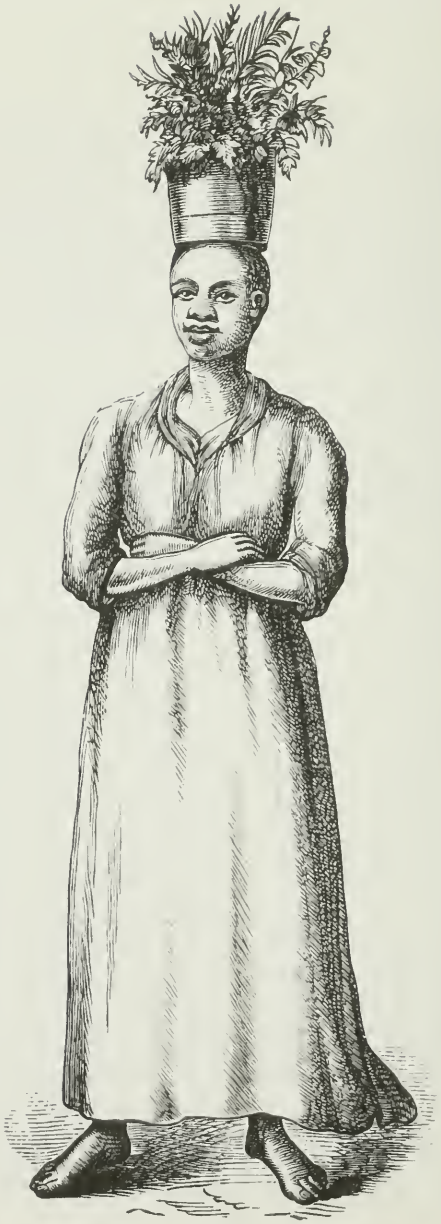
came to Natal, where the son presently died, and she was left alone in the world. There was as yet no burying-ground consecrated in Durban, so she buried him under a magnificent native tree in her garden, fenced it round, planted it, and takes the greatest care of the place. She is peculiar, and will not have any one to live with her, nor any female about the place if she can avoid it. She and I struck up an instantaneous friendship, and before we left the colony she called us her son and daughter.

Looking from the window just now I have seen a cloud of locusts amongst our field of beans, and little Henry Smith acting as scarecrow to drive them away. But what can he do with such an army? It is a lovely day, but following a night of thunder, lightning, and rain. I must put on my hat, and go and see how Mrs. Bowen is after the storms, for they make her ill.

Mrs. Bowen was so glad to see me. It was her birthday! She brought out fruit and wine, and gave me a magnificent papaw fruit to take home. I had taken little Henry and Margaret Smith for company. We passed through a lovely green valley, amidst a dozen of the largest oxen I have seen, with enormous horns. As the children showed no fear, I could not pretend to be afraid, and the oxen proved very quiet. Some Caffres were washing in a stream; the wild flowers smelling deliciously, and gay butterflies revelling in the air. Henry caught a lame locust, and brought it for my examination. He showed me its teeth, which were sharp and black, and its mouth opens thus)⌣(.

Leyland was absent on Sunday at Maritzberg; Louisa went off to church, and I was greatly surprised when she returned at night, saying, "Massa in Maritzberg, and *node* a man in charge" Gudgeon had gone off drunk some days before, and we hoped he would stay away, so I was alone; but I always had my class of little Smiths on a Sunday afternoon.

Leyland has hired another man and wife to live in the cottage (prepared for Gudgeon), and to do our work. Meantime, I have had his poultry to look after, and they



LOUISA.

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now come flocking up to me, and some will feed out of a spoon, and I quite enjoy them. Tiger-cats are a great annoyance, they get into the poultry-house in the night and feast. Poultry is of consequence in the country, for butcher's meat so soon decays in the hot climate that without fowls we should often be at a loss. I sometimes, when in a strait, find myself, like the children of Israel, "looking back to the flesh-pots of Egypt." Servants only increase the difficulty by making more to provide for, and they seem to do very little work. The new ones are to cater for themselves, however, which will make them more careful, unless they go to the hen-house like the tiger-cat.

December 13th.—We have had quite an inundation of men, who ought to be gentlemen. The manner of hospitality in Natal is very different from that in England. Your visitors pop in just at meal-time, or perhaps after, and expect bed and board. The bed is easily managed, people are not particular: a mat or mattress on the floor, with a rug to cover them, will suffice for accidental travellers. The board in a small family and hot climate is not always so easy. For breakfast we killed and boiled a chicken with rice, and broiled the almost bare bones of beef; coffee and a good dish of porridge, and all had plenty. Mr. Eastwood was staying in the house, and three more came at dinner-time. Sunday, too, when nothing can be got! Their manners and dress correspond with their free-and-easy entrance. Two have been officers in the army; one has a very handsome, uninteresting face, with a shaggy beard. I was thankful when they said good-bye and were gone.

I have drawn a pretty picture of my dark maiden, Louisa, just such an one as the missionaries would seize upon for their reports, which take with the benevolent at home; but it is the sunny side. She is a fine, able-bodied creature, about five feet eight or ten in height, and very stout and thick-set. She looks magnificent as she appears coming up the steep hill out of the wood, with her bucket of water on her head and branches of green standing in it to keep the water steady, her form or

bench (for she has been washing) under her arm, and walking erect. But, though active-minded, she is very idle, spares labour on everything, is never anxious to oblige, or to do a single thing she is not ordered to set about. She loves eating as all Caffres do, and stuffs till she is stupid, and then I have to do all, instead of three parts of the work. She talks of love to God, but does not strive to please her mistress, and, so far as I can judge, she does not know that she is a sinner, and yet I suppose she is as good a specimen of a convert to Christianity as most of those—the accounts of whom draw tears—in books or at meetings. She went to church as usual in the afternoon, but I told her she must be back before six in the morning to make breakfast. She arrived when I was washing the breakfast things and putting them away, and expressed no regret.

December 28th.—We have been to a wedding in Durban! We rode in early, dressed at our house, and rode out again in the evening. The bride was a good-looking girl of seventeen, dressed in white muslin, as were also most of the ladies. The bridegroom, a powerful dark man, double her age, who has been long in the colony, and has received a grant of land from Government in acknowledgment of a special service he rendered once by riding over the coast to give information of an outbreak.

The wedding-breakfast, which was ample, was held under an awning in the garden. The only carriage in the place was hired for the day, and after taking the bridal party to and from church, was sent round the town to bring the guests. It was a light, covered van, and the white curtains on this occasion were tied with pink ribbons. I suppose the van had springs; if not, it certainly had the power of conveying them to its occupants, for every jolt sent one almost right across to the other side.

As we rode home in the evening, we passed a figure sitting at a hut door. We pulled up and spoke, for indeed it was Mrs. E——, whom I find living in the meanest style. Another lady, to whom I brought letters, called

on me in Durban. She informed me she had been scraping potatoes for her husband's dinner. I felt shocked at the time, but I know better now. This lady and her husband had been burned out of house and home, and had lost everything ; but there are many who just sink, some from want of spirit, some from falling into the hands of sharpers, and many from ignorance and want of capital to carry out what they begin. The rogues in a new colony are the worst ; ever on the watch to take advantage of their neighbour's innocence or ignorance, and if there is money to get at it some way or other. But for these drawbacks, Natal would be a fine field for ploughing. It produces so rapidly. We are eating beans in December that we planted in November.

We kept Christmas Day as Charles Dickens would approve. We entertained a large party at dinner in the open air. Our table was spread with a round and a roast of beef, a plum pudding and custards, a couple of ducks, with vegetables and fruits, ale and porter. Mrs. Tyzack, our first servant or house-assistant, cooked most of the dinner in town, and sent some and brought the rest, along with her husband, four fine, fat, hearty children, a baby and nurse, and Mr. and Mrs. Brenton, my kind sick-nurse and her husband. Then we had the Smiths, our farmer, and their five children ; the Galliers and their two, from the hill side ; and two gentlemen who rode out on horseback. All were as happy and merry as possible. Leyland and I sat at the top of the table, the twelve children on skins on the grass. Mrs. Smith made us some excellent coffee, and Brenton, who has been a butler, cut the bread and butter so as to elicit applause. About six o'clock they set out home again, having washed up the dishes and made all straight before leaving.

While speaking of servants I may mention that Bella (our fellow-voyager's nurse) never goes out to walk without getting an offer of marriage, but so far she turns a deaf ear to all. She is a cheerful, tidy, useful woman, and would be a treasure to some poor man, one of those

who have lost their wives through the hardships that had to be endured when they first came to the colony in its infant state, from which indeed it has not yet risen.

A wolf was killed a day or two ago, not in fair fight certainly. It had been prowling about for several nights close to the house, and we feared for our poultry. An ox died and the wolf got a supper off that, dragging the ox into the bush; it was tracked, and the remains poisoned. In the morning the men found the wolf, a very large one, in agony, and soon despatched it. They have skinned it, stuffed the head, and put it outside our door, by way of coat of arms or crest.

A bird's nest has been brought in, hanging from the branch of a tree. The nest is entered by a long, bent passage, like a chimney; putting in my hand to the far end, I brought out a young, half-fledged bird, poor thing! It is not the only thing left motherless to-day; the wolf's cubs may cry long for their mother.

Louisa is a strange, untutored creature; she observed that I look out for my husband when I expect his return of an evening. She came to me one day saying he was visible. I went out to look, but he was hid from sight by bushes. I stood a moment looking. Louisa came behind (she is a sort of giantess), seized me round the ankles, and lifted me into the air, to look over the bushes! I was powerless as a struggling infant in her grasp. At last she set me down with a merry laugh at my discomfiture. She has got a new blue frock now, and did her best to wait at our Christmas party, as well as two Caffres in their best, i.e. they wore a bob of scarlet worsted the size of a pomegranate flower on their foreheads, and brass bracelets; beyond a few strips of rags the size of a philabeg hanging down before and behind, their shining dark skin of nature's bestowing was their only other covering. They drank our healths and seemed to enjoy the fun as much as any of us.

Leyland and I walked over on Christmas morning to our old neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, that she might not feel quite alone in the world. We carried her a jar of

fine marmalade, but she has been beforehand with us, for her gardener arrived ere we set out, with the compliments of the season and a fine papaw from her garden. The old lady was pleased to see us, but said it was a bad day with her, and she looked it. Her eyes were heavy and swollen. I was pleased to observe a Bible and Prayer-book on her sofa, for what comfort can she have in her lonely life equal to the Word of God and prayer? and from the account one of my servants gave of her, I feared she was still living for the limited world about her. She is peculiar—the fact of her living alone in the wilderness proves that—she fears being ruled if she should send for a relative, and her temper is very hasty. The people think her rich, for she has employed two gardeners; but her garden is her delight, and her personal wants are few.

Her house is within a walk of ours, so I went again soon to see her, and to make a sketch of her beautiful Caffre-tree and the view from her door. She asked me to stay and partake of her early dinner; this I declined, for I had left our house empty, and not a handle yet on a door! but I saw her gardener bustling about from the kitchen to the house, so I was not surprised to find luncheon on the table when I had finished my sketch. We had a good deal of conversation. Her mind is wonderful. Her memory, reasoning powers, every faculty perfect as in a young person, with a good touch of romance to gild all she says and hears, and a rich store of book knowledge and history, so that an hour's chat with her is a treat in the wilderness of Africa, and we grow daily greater friends. She told me of the loss of her three sons and her husband, one in each of the four quarters of the globe, and she took her garden key and her stick, wearing her last son's straw hat, to show me the tree under which he is buried, and to ask me to come some day and make her a sketch of it. She considers I am sent by God to be her friend, adding that wherever she has wandered she has found one who can feel like herself, and who has the same eternal interests at heart. Truly was I glad to hear her speak in this

way. In after years I partook of the sacrament with her, as well as my husband, in her little thatched cottage of two rooms, administered by Archdeacon Mackenzie, whose painful end in the interior, when created bishop to go among the natives, will be in the memory of many.

When I returned home from my walk, "Turner," our new man, brought me a small snake from the field, he "thought I might like to take it off!" He had seen me drawing a caterpillar. I declined the snake, however.

Twelve Caffres are just shipped for England for a show. They are trained to exhibit, so will not be seen quite so natural as I see them.

At half-past ten to-day I sent Louisa a message; she was so long away that I found I must make the bread myself or we should be without, so I collected all the requisites, mounted the ladder to our upper room (the stairs not being yet up), got down flour, rice, sugar, meal, &c., came down again, and the bread was set to rise before Louisa returned. I suspect she went to visit the "good girl" who lives in a place near us, and whom she has occasionally brought to have a chat with her in our kitchen. The little Smiths came over from the farm to lunch off rice and jam, much to their satisfaction, and their mother brought a jug of soup, and presently Mrs. Galliers arrived with a fine papaw from Mrs. Bowen, for whom she washes, and goes to assist in the house in the mornings. My little pupil, Margaret Smith, will never bring me much credit. There is some defect both of speech and ear for sound. Again and again I tell her the words and they are forgotten, yet she takes pains.

As we cannot go into Durban to church, we collect a small congregation at home, and read together. The Galliers sometimes come with their little boy, and Smith's children are regular.

December 30th.—We have had a visit from the Caffre magistrate and his three attendants on the subject of clearing some bushland for a road Leyland wishes to make. This important person wears a long white

flannel coat, edged with blue and red, and probably this is all the dress he wears, except a round hat. He is a stout man with bare black feet, and is called Captain Tuta. His attendants were nearly naked, and fine-looking men.

Louisa has gone off to visit her mother for a week. She has only been eight weeks with me, yet she must have as much holiday as she asks.

"Who will do your work, Louisa?" said I.

"I don't know, ma'am."

"Am I to clean the pans, Louisa?"

"Oh no, ma'am!"

"Who then?" She shrugged her shoulders, and suggested "Boy."

"But Boy is busy in the garden; don't you think you could find me a good girl to do your work if I let you go?"

"No, ma'am, no Caffre girl, only one Caffre girl at Mr. B——'s."

"But you could find one, I think?"

"No, ma'am, no girl, they all wife."

So I must manage as I can until Louisa chooses to return. But with all her faults she is truthful and honest.

I think before closing the year I must give a description of some visitors who came upon us unexpectedly. As we were getting into bed, two sportsmen arrived after a long day's ride, wanting to be housed, as they would go to an inn. Leyland went and received them and made them comfortable in our parlour, putting their horses up in the stable. They were drenched with rain, so he left with them our only bottle of brandy, which was nearly full, and came to bed, leaving them rugs and mats to lie on the floor. In the morning the brandy bottle was empty! Some time after these gentlemen came again with a third on a Sunday. One of the party was drunk, and I refused to have him in the house. I was told he had fallen from his horse and was hurt, so I could not send him away, but said he must be taken to Gudgeon's cottage by the stable, so

they took him there and we sent him his meals from the house. This drunken fellow came to a sad end. He bought a cask of wine, drank himself insensible, and forgot to turn the tap. In the morning the barrel had emptied itself on the floor, and the man was found lying dead.

New Year's Day, 1853, and midsummer heat with a pleasant breeze! How differently has it been spent from any New Year's Day hitherto. Busy all day with little household matters, and Leyland in the garden planting sugar cane. The little Smiths came for rice and jam. They are a nice little set of useful children, Alec, William, Henry, and Margaret, and I am trying to teach them what will be of use all their lives.

A part of my New Year's Day work was making a pudding for dinner, mixing a loaf for baking, and even sweeping the floor, for Louisa stayed so long at the well I had to do that myself. Our interesting old friend, Mrs. Bowen, sent us a pretty note and a papaw to usher in the new year. She brought the seed of this fruit into the colony from the Brazils, but told me she believed it to be an Australian fruit. Without very much flavour in itself it makes a very pleasant luncheon with a little sugar and wine poured in and eaten with a spoon, and it grows easily. The scent of the blossom is very fragrant; the male blossom resembles the orange flower, but is stronger and coarser. The wild flowers of Natal have frequently a fine perfume; to walk along bush or field is a perpetual nosegay of sweet odours. Wild honey, too, has a fine flavour; but I have not tried the flavour of the locusts. Our garden is planted with pineapples and beans rather than with flowers, which grow wild in such abundance, that there is less need for them in the gardens.

Our first Sunday in 1853 was strangely spent. Louisa set off to church so soon as breakfast was over, Turner would be absent till afternoon, and we were left entirely alone. Rain came down towards afternoon more and more heavily, and we knew no one would attempt to come through the rain that evening, so we managed for

LOUISA AND GUDGEON.

ourselves. Our kitchen hitherto has been in the open air, part of the time under the trees, and latterly in a small space Turner has wattled round open to the sky. The iron house is up, but has no chimney, so when the smoke is blown it is unendurable, except for Caffres, who are used to living in smoke in their craals. We have a grate in our sitting-room, an unusual luxury, given by a dear sister in England; and with plenty of wood we can make ourselves cheerful. On this wet Sunday evening we did as we could, and warmed our cocoa over a saucer with burning spirits. Next morning I looked out; it was still raining, but a Caffre was standing ready, so I set him to light the fire and put the kettle on, and, after giving the fowls their mealies, set about preparing our own breakfast. A neighbour called while I was so engaged with my old bonnet on, and looking doubtless very like a housemaid. My nurse had told me that she sees very few ladies; that she should make as good an one as most so-called out here, and *she* "would make a mess of it."

Dreary as a wet day makes us look, I must describe our sitting-room on a fine one.

It is a midsummer evening, the fresh breeze that made the sun's heat pleasant through the day is lulled; our room is light, airy, and cheerful, a window opening to the floor at each end, the walls papered with white, no carpet of any description on the white-boarded floor, as little furniture as possible, and that of the most motley description and all of it for use, harmonizing well, and in character with the country, which yet—in its infancy as an English colony—has not reached the point of either elegance, refinement, or luxury. A light table of yellow wood is in the centre, a cupboard of the same in one corner containing china cups and saucers, a Christmas cake, bottles, raspberry vinegar, and other sundries, entitling it to the name of a Scotch-cupboard. A side table, also of yellow wood of the country, is covered with crockery in daily use. Some bottles of porter are underneath, and our bread is in a great mug. In another corner stands for the present my mahogany

travelling chest of drawers, dear little Helen's bookstand on the top, my husband's revolver in its case, and his cornopean and music-book, a source of frequent and agreeable recreation. Amongst various airs, the mail-coach bugle-blast is a favourite, recalling days long gone by. Our joiner on hearing it the other day said it brought the tears to his eyes. Still nearer the corner of the room, stand two baskets full of newspapers, strings, corks, &c., &c., and my drum workbasket, above which, resting against the wall, are two curious birds' nests, one with eggs in, beautifully woven, among reeds and branches. In another corner of the room are glasses and knives on a tray stand; and American cane chairs make up the furniture, my sofa-chair looking quite patriarchal amongst the others. Beautiful views from both windows, and two doors. One enters our bedroom, the other into the vestibule, which I convert into a butler's pantry, and am sometimes caught in consequence by a visitor while washing the china and glass.

CHAPTER IV.

January, 1853.—We have a beautiful brood of white chickens from the bantams, seventeen in number, pure white sturdy little things. Our poultry are a great pleasure, but also an anxiety on account of wild animals, who are as fond of them as we are. A tiger has been heard about lately in the evenings, and on our return from a call at Mrs. Bowen's, both Turner and Louisa asked if we had not heard the tiger, as they had, close to our path! Afterwards they heard a wolf; so we have pleasant neighbours, but met neither. They prefer our calves and poultry. Hawks also fly away with an occasional chicken. Turner came in a great hurry for the gun one day "to shoot a serpent that was sitting up a yard high very near the house." Of course it did not wait to be shot, and he brought back the gun disappointed. Wild animals, however, retreat further into the bush as man takes possession. A few years ago elephants and lions frequented our neighbourhood, now nothing is seen of the former but a white mark on a tree, made by their scratching their shoulders against it, and only one lion was seen during the five years I was in the bush; but the footsteps of tigers or panthers were frequent in our garden walks. The Smiths heard a large snake in the bush one day and saw its bed, but the reptile was out of sight. Afterwards they heard the crunching of bones, but did not feel inclined to disturb it; poor Smith thought of his children, but they were all safe.

Louisa returned from her week's holiday on the 10th. How we got along during her absence I know not, but we pulled through somehow. We had some strange

visitors one night. A number of oxen strayed into our garden, trampling all over the newly-planted pine-beds. Scarcely a square yard was unmarked by their clumsy feet, yet singularly enough not above a dozen plants, out of several hundreds, had been trodden on. Instinct must have made them avoid the pricks.

We cannot get the joiner to come regularly to finish our house. The handles are still off the doors, and the staircase is not yet up to our room above. While in this unfinished state a lady arrived from England, to join her brother, who had a farm beyond Maritzberg. She brought a letter of introduction to me, but, hearing she was comfortably housed with a fellow-passenger in Durban, I did not think it necessary to offer to take her to our house at once, till I received a broad hint from a gentleman that I was not doing my duty, so I wrote to the young lady, told her how I was situated, but that if it would be a convenience to her I should be happy to see her. And so, without further notice, she hired the town van to bring her out, which, being very light, and our roads very steep and rough, was upset on the way. Little Margaret Smith came running across to say, "A lady would be with us in a few minutes;" and to be sure she was—carried up in the driver's arms. She threw herself half-fainting on the sofa-chair; then we got her up the ladder to bed, which I had luckily made ready, and there she stayed, and, as I was still not very strong (after my fever) for climbing up and down a ladder, I got little Margaret Smith to come over and be her nurse, and our guest stayed with us for ten days or a fortnight, most of the time in bed.

Her exit was equally unceremonious. She wrote to her brother to come for her, and one forenoon a wagon made its appearance with her brother. She got out of bed, packed up her things with Margaret's help, and was gone! We had the doctor out to see her, but he did not seem to think there was much wrong with her health, poor thing! she was depressed—alone in the desert!

It is a great treat to me to go over and sit half an

hour with old Mrs. Bowen. There is so much of freshness and rich lore in her conversation. I have made a sketch for her of the tree under which her son is buried. I found her packing a box to send to England. She said she was sending away everything of value, for when she died she did not know what hands might get hold of "the old woman's things." I was glad to see a well-worn Bible lying at hand, and some remark of mine touched the right chord. She spoke openly to me of her trust in her Saviour, and is glad to find one who can understand and respond to her feelings on this subject. And yet she is one who is openly talked of as a shrew, and a most ungovernable and unamiable old vixen! She is an elegant poetess, a great reader, and clear reasoner; a good gardener, a perfect treat in an intellectual conversation. But she likes her own way, and fears being taken in. She is quite a lady in mind and manner, with a high tone of feeling and of principle, and considerable experience of the world and its ways. It is a great privilege to me to live within an easy walk of her house, while, turn which way I will on other sides, I find nothing but fraud, malice, and deceit, and often a great deal of vulgarity and ill-breeding, from which in various ways we suffer.

Leyland having to go to Maritzberg about this time, I found myself entirely alone, even Louisa away. Mrs. Smith sent one of her little boys to sleep in the room upstairs, that I might not feel so entirely alone in the wilderness; but I had no fear. I took the little bell to my bedside, stuck a pair of scissors under the door which opens into the garden, and had not yet got a handle or bolt, and slept soundly. We shut the great dog up in the stable for fear of a tiger getting him!

The new road in the bush, which my husband is making, being partly clear, Mrs. Smith and her family came over next day to try it in the cool evening. We all set out together, Smith leading. We pushed through about ten yards of bush in single file with only a few scratches, and found ourselves in a capital path, most romantically surrounded by shrubs and creepers, meet-

ing overhead at times. Presently we reached the flag-staff on the top of the hill, and had a splendid view of the bay, the sea, and Durban lying below us or rather beyond us, for the hill seems trifling in the comparison. It will greatly shorten the distance into Durban. The want of roads forms a great drawback to farmers and settlers of all kinds, and Government is not very kindly thought of for turning a deaf ear to petitions. A small sum wisely laid out would prove an immense advantage in a few short cuts, and through less hilly and less swampy, and soft, sandy paths, which weary the feet of the oxen or horses. The farmers are all poor as yet, and cannot make roads, and the governor will not move in the matter without certain assistance being promised, which the people are too poor to give. They think they are taxed sufficiently for the support of a mock aristocracy of rulers and under-rulers, and *subs.* for even the under-rulers.

Leyland's description of his journey to Maritzberg is so different from English travelling that I must write it. After striking into the bush-path to shorten the distance to the high road, and having ridden about two hours, it became suddenly so dark, as of an impending storm, that he could not distinguish the path. Fearing to lose himself he dismounted, let the horse eat grass beside him, and lay down under a bush to rest until the moon should rise. No storm came down, so he got a good sleep, having first eaten a hard-boiled egg I had put in his pocket. He had nothing wherewith to get a smoke! The moon was late, but it had risen when he awoke, and he proceeded on his way. Almost immediately he found the path, and at about half a mile's distance came to the house where he should have slept. He got oats for his horse, a glass of brandy and water for himself, and a cigar, and went on for a couple of hours. Then his horse became tired, so he found his way to a Caffre's craal, got a few mealies, as a great favour, for sixpence, a drink of sour milk for himself, unsaddled, took out of his pocket one of his scones, ate part, and gave the rest to the Caffre's children, and then rode on again for about

fifteen miles more, when he came up with Mr. ——, a Dutchman, who invited him to go to his farm for the night, and go into Maritzberg, which was very near, before breakfast. And this he did, riding on with the kind Dutchman another ten miles. This weary ride was undertaken with a bad boil, called Natal-sore, on his foot. These sores are very common, few escape them. Scratching tick or flea-bites irritates the flesh, and if not in good condition it festers, and produces painful sores or boils. I never suffered from them myself, but scarcely any one I met did not know from experience what they were. The ticks bury themselves under the skin, and live there; few can help scratching. I have walked to old Mrs. Bowen's through the grass, and found my white petticoat covered all over with these tiny creatures, and I have walked there without having one, so they must come under certain winds and states of atmosphere.

About this time (February, 1853) I observed a smartly-dressed Caffre man came occasionally to pay his respects to Louisa. I guessed what the result must be, so I spoke to her, and she frankly tells me she "tink she like him. Him pray *in* me in church." And soon she told me when I paid her wages, that she must go away, and live at the mission where her lover is; and so she set off, crying when I told her she ought not to leave me unprovided with another, it was ungrateful after all I had taught her. She shrugged her shoulders and was very sorry, but selfishness prevailed, and she set off there and then. Louisa has interested me greatly. She has considerable reasoning powers, and was so desirous to learn to read English, and was beginning to speak and understand it so well, that I wonder she did not see her interest in remaining a little longer. She was very truthful; only once have I known her persist in an untruth. I have known her after a first denial and a little hesitation say, "Yes, ma'am, I d d." She took a great fancy to my India-rubber galoshes, telling me they were too large for me, and when I found them split down the front I accused her of trying them on her own great foot. She

denied, but I fear she had done it. Louisa is only sixteen years old, but full-grown, and her lover is twenty. Under a missionary she may become useful to her people, though her knowledge is scanty, and her mental education slow. She tells me she is a fugitive Zulu from Faku's country, where her father was killed. Her mother snatched her up on her back, and as she was running off, the child got struck on the back, where she always feels a pain during a cold. She would on no account go back to Faku's land. All in Natal are similar fugitives, and prefer being under English rule, as safer and less tyrannical.

Curiously enough, Louisa's back was scarcely turned, when a young Caffre lad came to offer himself, telling me he could do everything; so, thinking he would do as well as Louisa with a little instruction, "Ginger" was engaged, and three gentlemen are coming to dinner on Monday. Mr. White, the elephant hunter, is one of them. Turner will help in the kitchen and in waiting, and perhaps Mrs. Smith, who cooks well, will come over. Turner, however, is leaving soon. I find "Ginger" is really a nice, handy, good-tempered Caffre; but his is a strange race; selfish, indolent, free, independent fellows, "living in the presence of their brethren," and taking no manner of responsibility upon them. Give them their wages to the day, and their "scoff," *alias* food, and their bond with you is ended; they rarely care for you excepting as suits their interest. I have been told that the harder you use a Caffre, the better he behaves. Of this I cannot speak; but one of the Caffres working for my husband asked for a little sugar, of which they are all very fond, so not only he but the whole six had a handful given them in good nature; so next day they turned out for better scoff, and five of the seven walked off on its being refused, knob-stick in hand, and until they want money or food they will not come back. Smith says, "Few get such good scoff as Mr. Feilden's Caffres." They know no hardships beyond hunger, and that they can appease by work. They can sleep on the bare ground in any craal, and roam at will during the day.

Their manner of sleeping in cold weather is to make a fire in the centre, and they lie in a circle round it, their feet towards the fire and heads on wooden pillows. They desire nothing more, except a few beads to decorate their persons. They are very acute, but have neither generosity, gratitude, nor desire to oblige. They do what you bid them if you are there to see, but nothing more. They feel the English Government is mild with them, and know how to take advantage of it; but, were a sufficient motive to stir them, they would rise to a man against their gentle rulers. Such, at least, is my impression at this early date of my acquaintance.

It is a curious fact that all the servants who offer for our place can, or say they can, do everything. We have just engaged a man and his wife named Welsh, who are thankful to come and seem decent enough people, though not regular servants. I hope I shall find the wife a help in housework; but I am learning, like themselves, to become a Jack-of-all-trades and master of none. I bake very good bread, mix a capital meat pie, examine the "leg of beef," here sold for 9*d.* a leg, prepare it both for soup, hot pot, and boiling, and prepare the marrow-bone, and really, except for the fatigue and labour to one unaccustomed to such work, it is the most comfortable way. The oven part is the worst. A bake-pan is placed over a fire of wood in our oven and wood is put on the lid. This fire has to be constantly watched by a Caffre, to keep it at the right temperature; but a Caffre cannot be made to understand why one large fire should not suffice, and let him go play while it burns, so unless you watch, and run out every now and then to see if he is attending to the fire, your loaf gets burnt to a cinder in the lower crust half an inch thick, and your pie-crust is sodden when the meat is baked hard. The lessons I am learning in cookery, however, will never come amiss, and I learn many things.

"Ginger" does very fairly. I have made him a tunic of white calico—not long *white*, alas !—and, though not a Christian, he comes in for prayers and sits on a chair while the chapter is read, with his arms crossed and a

grave expression of countenance. He knows God made him, and says he understands the reading, but I imagine he means that the sound of the words is familiar, for I don't think he knows enough English to comprehend the sense. In time, if he stay, we may teach him something; but they are a wandering tribe, and stay not long in one place. For a month Ginger was our only house-assistant, and I taught him to be very useful, but when I sent him into Durban for the meat he stayed so long that I invariably had that day's work to do myself. My neighbour, Mrs. Galliers, had too much of her own work to do, and of Mrs. Bowen's, to come and help, and I used to feel it quite cheerful to see her little boy leading about his infant sister, who was often left in his sole charge a whole day. He was only about five years old, but he never deserted or left his little sister for his own play. I hoped to find a great relief when Mrs. Welsh came, and so, for a short time, I did; but she had a family of four children, and her husband's and their food to prepare and house to keep, so her thoughts are more in her own house than mine, and her feet also.

February, 1853.—The tiger-cats break into the hen-house as cleverly as professed London thieves. We had been watching for one of these animals which had regularly supped off a few of our fattest fowls for several evenings, and had contrived to get off with a favourite brown hen who was sitting over her chickens under our house. Leyland and his gun were out at the first cry of distress more than once, but the tiger-cat always managed to retreat to the bush, generally with its prey. One night, however, Leyland rushed out with his gun and went in pursuit on the track; the tiger-cat had dropped the hen and made off with all speed, and not being satisfied with its supper, it went across to the farm (later on) to the poultry-house there. The noise quickly roused the farmer, who with a bull's-eye lamp, and his wife behind him in her night-dress, went straight to the door of the hen-house, when the animal sprang past him, dashing the lamp out and slightly scratching his hand. Next

night the tiger cat returned, made a hole at each end of the hen-house thatch, put his head in at one, and the fowls all rushed out at the other, flying about in every direction, and the tiger-cat after a fine young cock that escaped as far as the cook-house, but was brought down there. An ambuscade was laid the following night, however, and when he came to regale himself as usual he received five or six shots from Smith's gun, and the Caffres with their knobkerries (a strong wooden stick with a ball at the end) soon secured the beast, carried it over in triumph to our house, and laid it at midnight at our bedroom door, which opens into the garden. We were up in a moment; I threw my dressing-gown over my shoulders and seated myself in the open doorway, squatting on the floor. The scarce dead animal was lying on the ground, below me seven or eight naked Caffres, headed by Smith, formed a half-circle round, laughing, and addressing the still warm animal in abusive terms, singing and dancing in their measured steps, waving their knobkerries up and down; a full clear moon lighting the strange scene, and forming a singularly wild, romantic picture with its broad shadows. After they had sufficiently enjoyed their triumph they carried it off again to a place of safety for being stuffed as a trophy.

March, 1853.—The rapid and rich vegetation of the climate is marvellous. We have been only about six months at our Feniscowles. At first nearly all around us was bush, and required clearing, and already we have a thick double hedge of Mauritius pea nearly six feet high, bearing abundantly; a double row of sunflowers, all planted from seed, tall and full of handsome flowers, eight or ten beauties on a stem, and the green leaves near a foot wide. We have an orchard of papaw-trees, and a quantity of pineapples planted, a few sugar canes which grow well, and a field of the cotton-tree. The wild flowers are beyond description, beautiful, brilliant, and luxuriant, most of them having the clean, shiny leaf of hothouse plants in England. It was grievous to see them rooted out of the ground in clearing, to "put

better things in," for indeed they *were* weeds, in the eye of the farmer. Natal was surely intended for a fine country, for everything will grow that is put into the ground ; but it is all a wilderness. However, I hear that people's faces are growing shorter now than they looked a while ago ; the Dutch farmers are coming into the interior, and they will increase traffic. The Dutch are not generally fond of the English, having met with some hard usage a few years ago ; neither do the Caffres look very pleasantly upon them from the entirely contrary reason, viz., that they have been too leniently dealt with and are too independent to make useful subjects or servants, and they know they can't be compelled. It does seem rather hard to oblige a people to work that can and prefer to live without, but the Caffres are not natives, but refugees, and their work, even while paid for, might have been a part of the bond of protection. Caffre Ginger works very fairly. He has a wife somewhere, but wants another, so his work now is to get money to buy cows, and the cows are to procure him another wife !

April, 1853.—Glass has at last arrived in the colony, and we hope soon to get some to replace our calico windows, which, besides shutting out the light, show stains of rain. Our winter is coming on, and calico alone between us and the weather will be rather cold. The broad verandah has hitherto protected us nearly sufficiently, but on one or two occasions doors and windows (still without fastenings) have been blown about, and rain has been troublesome. Our books, occupying some very unprotected shelves, had to be removed in a grand hurry. On these rainy days our parlour grate is a great luxury as well as most useful, for we cook our breakfast and use the room as a genteel kitchen, not allowing the Caffres its free use, but making ourselves our own servants. I have set a gentleman visitor to watch the baking of my scones, like King Alfred of old, but I do not remember if he allowed them to burn. Some of the sportsmen are capital cooks, and ready on an emergence. One, well known by his book of sports—

since published[1]—taught me how to make a savoury omelette, and most excellently it turned out.

I have had the pleasure of a week's visit from my kind nurse, Mrs. Brenton, who has benefited in more than one way by the change. The fresh air and chatting with me have raised her spirits, which were very low on their reduced prospects, owing to the long illness of her poor husband. They talk of going to Australia, as they can't get on in Natal, and money is not so scarce in that country. Mrs. Brenton occupies the room upstairs, or up the ladder, for the staircase is still hanging only half up, and we cannot get the joiner to work steadily at it to finish while he is about it. He will come one day and go away for a week or two. On the occasion of one of his visits he contrived to put one handle on a door. It is surprising how safe we feel in the bush, so very slightly protected: neither bolts nor bars, and calico in our window-frames. I shut the door by means of a pair of scissors stuck under. Oh! how I grumble at the joiner, "Reddish," when in trying to get it open I break my nail.

[1] William Baldwin, Esquire, author of "African Hunting from Natal to the Zambesi."

CHAPTER V.

I HAVE quite a large class on Sunday afternoons. The Smiths and Welshes come, and we have Catechism and reading, and the "Pilgrim's Progress," with which the children are delighted, and though they receive it now as a story, it will return to their understanding when they grow up. The two little girls come to me daily for a lesson in reading. The mothers are very thankful I will take the trouble, for they are so very busy through the week that they are only too glad to rest on Sunday. One had given over teaching in despair, for the child was so slow that at ten years old she could not say her letters, and no attempt had been made to teach the other child. Yet the parents are well-educated women. As the colony advances, so will the opportunities of learning increase, but at present, from all I see and hear, the amount of ignorance amongst the children of respectable emigrants is fearful to contemplate. Missionaries for the white children would be a much more hopeful enterprise than for the coloured population. Of the families who have gone out, hoping to grow rich by farming, most have spent their all in bringing the land into cultivation. Before it yields a sufficient return, many are reduced to give up, and go as farm-servants to others. Then the children are required at home to take care of the babies and cook their parents' dinners, fetch wood and water, &c. It is thus with the Welshes, and if the mother does not come to do my work, I know she is busy at home, and often do it myself to spare her. In fact it would be a good lesson for ladies in the middle or upper classes in England just to *see* in a young colony what others have to go through in order to live at all. I feel as if I never

dare murmur again at anything which may befall me, so long as I have food and shelter, and the decencies of life, as distinguished from its luxuries. It strikes one more in a colony, because the sufferers are by no means from the lowest of the people, but have had good education, and been in good situations and positions in England. Some, too, have not known what work was, but have become reduced by poverty from a considerably higher grade in life. There is extreme poverty in Natal, but you meet with no beggars or rags in the streets. Those who can scarcely get a sufficent meal will be seen with a silk dress, perhaps, on a Sunday, unless they have been obliged to sell it. But most look forward still with hope.

The sugar cane grows well on the coast-land, and sheep do well in the interior. The Dutch are again beginning to "trek" from the old country, and to settle in the higher parts of Natal, on their sheep-farms, hoping for better government than they have hitherto experienced. Caffre labour will be a difficulty with settlers, and people talk of sending for coolies. The missionary question is a serious one. I cannot pretend to give an opinion of its merits, but the working effects are certainly deficient, and I am told that the missionaries find their converts unsatisfactory. My experience in Louisa was certainly unsatisfactory, and she was a fine, clever creature, and a good specimen, but innately indolent and selfish, with a strong native stubbornness of disposition. As far as I conld make out from her, the natives worship nothing at all. To eat, drink, snuff, smoke; to sit on the ground and chat, and to stalk over the country doing noth ng, seem the extent of life's business and enjoyment, unless when they want to buy cattle, and then they hire for work. A number of oxen may have strayed and got amongst your vegetables, or a tiger-cat may be disturbing your hen-roost, but a Caffre will never stir to drive them off till he is roused by his master and sent. What he believes himself bound to do he will do, if your eye is kept over him, and no more. Ginger refused to clean the boots of a gentleman who

was staying in our house, saying they were not his master's boots. I made him clean them, but again he declined cleaning Mrs. Brenton's when she stayed with me. He eyed them all over, as if measuring, looked at my foot, and shook his head. I told him he *must* clean them, and I believe he did, but I was not strict to inquire, and after a struggle of this kind for mastery, though I succeeded at the moment, I did not generally try it again, lest I should come off the loser.

I have had a strange set of visitors, some naked Caffres, Ginger's relations and friends; his three sisters, his father, and a brother or two—as such he introduces them. They arrived at midday yesterday, bringing meat with them, which they cooked in our kitchen, and made themselves quite at home there, declaring their intention of staying all night. Of course I got no work from Ginger during their visit. Very merry they were, laughing and singing (if singing it could be called), Ginger the while looking on as grave as a judge. The girls seemed to make all the fun. They made me blush and laugh in spite of myself. Their dress was a close-fitting dark rag round their loins, ornamented with beads, and something resembling a fringe; a few brass bracelets; beads round their throats; and one had tied a handkerchief round her head as a turban. Their hair was black and woolly, short curls close to the head, fine white teeth, large thick lips, and wide nostrils, with good, intelligent countenances. One of the girls was very fat, she seemed too fat to move with the activity of the other two, who in singing as they sat on the ground, shook their bodies about, threw their arms round each other, imitating an embrace, wriggling about with their bosoms quite exposed, large and full; the extraordinary effect of which they appeared to be quite unconscious of, and were not the least ashamed. I asked Ginger to tell me what their song was about, wishing to know the style of their thoughts, but he said he could not. They screamed with laughter, keeping it up till late, when they all lay down for the night in our iron house. Ginger says they worship

nothing, and never pray to anything. I told him he should talk to them of what I had told him of the great God, but, except to show his superior knowledge (he is very vain), I don't suppose he will trouble himself. The girls sit and take precedence according to their age, but I could not learn any of their ages. The fat girl was always before her sisters, being the eldest. One of them looked at my waist, then pinched her own in, laughed, and pointed. I gave in to their humour, pinched my waist, showing them it was not by any means tightened; they seemed quite to admire it; but except the fat girl, they were very neat themselves, and very dark. The deep colour of their skin, added to its evident toughness, has rather the effect of well-fitting leather, which indeed it is. This morning they set out on their further travels, not caring one bit for the coming rain, and this leads me to another feature in the Caffre character, or perhaps the same in another shape, viz. idleness. As soon as a shower comes on the working Caffre throws down his tools and runs to shelter; he will not work in rain, though he could walk through it caring no more than a duck. Ginger has been idle all this day on account of the rain, while his sisters have gone cheerily on their journey! I felt a kind of yearning for the souls of the poor heathen creatures, who looked so joyous and really as if they possessed reasoning powers But, ah! I know how strong are their natural tempers, habits, and prejudices, with their disinclination to change. It will be the leopard changing his spots when they are converted. They are but one grade above the brute beast. The exciting stories that are printed in missionary reports are very likely true in themselves; but the anecdotes so touching could be quite reversed in the same individuals, and equally true. To try to civilize them without the scriptural foundation, would be to place a dangerous, unmerciful enemy in your own path. Gratitude seems unknown to them. Excite their passions and you may run. Ah! how ignorant are those at home, both of themselves and of the nature of the work of a missionary, who talk so enthusiastically

of wishing to go amongst the heathen, and fearing not to live in the desert in so good a cause, and how their ardour and their spirits sink when they find the hopelessness and impossibility of conveying their meaning to the barbarous tribes of Africa! We had an African youth with us a fortnight ago, well dressed and intelligent, the descendant of African slaves. I pondered on the fate that had returned him to the land of his stolen parents, and that had raised him in the third or fourth generation—perhaps even in the second—so much above his countrymen, and I wondered if slavery had not been a blessing to him.

Poor Ginger is very handy for a Caffre, but growing quite lazy with Mrs. Welsh, upon whom, and all of her class, he looks with extreme contempt, and when squatted on the ground will ask her to hand things to him. She is rather fearful of exercising the authority I tell him she has. He says to her, "You are poor people, but me is a gentleman; me have plenty cows, plenty mealies, and plenty oats. When me in craal me do no work; me wife make fire, gather wood, cook food, and she say 'Now you come eat.'"

We are continually being tormented by wild animals. When we have reared our poultry, the tiger-cat takes them; when the rabbits grow sizeable, a snake, or other venomous creature, will suck out their entrails; when the fine roots of the arrowroot are beginning to ripen, a drove of wild pigs from the bush, and sometimes your neighbours' tame pigs, get loose, and devour every root in your ground. Locusts are a scourge when they come accidentally (for their visits are not so common). They will ruin a plantation of beans, or any more valuable vegetable. Just now there are long lines of woolly caterpillars creeping along the ground and up the walls and hedges. What mischief they do I know not, but one made me creep all over that I found on my stocking. We killed a snake yesterday about a yard long, close to the house. Ginger saw it coming up the path and screamed, which brought all the men to see what was the matter. Mr. G. Eastwood rushed out with the

chambock (a whip of hide). The snake ran up into a tree and was regularly besieged, but finally obliged to yield, when a cut from a hoe despatched him. It was of a beautiful green colour, and venomous. We rarely saw one so near the house, but in the bush there are plenty; one (a boa, I think) was killed there six yards long, but I never had the luck to see one, except a bright green, small snake, which kept me in fear for a week, as I saw it run up a spout on the side of the house and I feared its making its nest in the thatch. A few days after William Smith saw it come down out of the spout, and that was the last of it.

During this month Leyland had a ninety miles' ride, to Richmond and further, to look after his cattle-farm and other matters. I was left to myself for a few days and had no visitors. I went one day in a hurry to see my old neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, as she sent me a note saying she was in trouble. I found it was an effort from a bad man in the Bay to extort money from her, which was rather hard at her great age, and she so very particular to pay regularly. The man we knew well was not one to let a bill lie over two and a half years, but I fancy she would have to pay again rather than be summoned, as he threatened if she did not. Old B—— was not over-scrupulous, as his dealings with my husband proved. Indeed, I could fill this book with tales of fraud and iniquity of which my husband was made the victim, only I would rather not recall these very painful themes.

On the 19th of this month (April, 1853) old Gudgeon made his reappearance, very penitent, telling us he has suffered, and we must let bygones be bygones. He has been up the country with Captain Stephenson, and has run off from him after or in a drunken fit, and doubtless he will do the same from us in a month or so.

My little class of children on Sunday, the 24th, had scarcely left when Ginger made his appearance at the open window with several Caffres, his friends, to whom he wished to show the elegancies of a white man's house. So I allowed them to look in, and seated myself at the

window to chat with them, Ginger acting as interpreter. I told them as well as I could about the great God who made them. They were very attentive and well-behaved, but laughed as Ginger translated what I said in his own way, and how much or how little they carried away in their understanding I cannot say—not much, I fear.

Another Sunday I had an incident of a different kind. We had sauntered out in the walk, attracted by the lovely afternoon, and were admiring all nature, when I became attracted by the castor-oil shrub, and buried myself in a bush to gather a handful of its berries. Engrossed with my own thoughts, and aided by my deafness, I perceived nothing that went on beyond me, when Leyland gave me a smart slap on my shoulder, and, turning suddenly round, I found myself in presence of two gentlemen on horseback and one beyond me. I gave way to a hearty laugh at my propinquity, so unknown, while the gentlemen had been bowing and "how-do-ye-doing" for some time. They were the Governor and two gentlemen from Durban, and his Excellency, wearied with bowing unnoticed, had ridden past me to join my husband. We turned and went to the house, where the Governor's visit was honoured with a bottle of champagne. He was excessively stupid and quiet, and merely grunted out a few words in reply to anything addressed to him. Leyland feared he was offended with me; while I, more suspicious of evil, wondered if he had been dining. However, he complained of a pain in his head, and I heard afterwards he suffered occasionally from the effects of a former sunstroke. Altogether the visit was not so satisfactory as it might have been, and I cannot say I much admired him.

Next day, while we were very busy, two gentlemen rode up early to ask to see Leyland's sugar-canes, which are very fine, and they lunched with us. Scarcely were they gone and our dinner over than up rode Captain Stephenson and Mr. Bevan, hungry as hunters—having ridden forty miles—to be housed and fed for an indefinite period with their horses. Such is the kind of hospitality

expected in a young colony, where hotels are scarce and very dear, and purses short. They stayed four days, turning the ways of the house upside down, and making Mrs. Welsh and me very glad when they took their departure, for men throw off every sign of courteous manner in the bush, where they can hunt, and drink, and smoke. At first these two treated me little better than a servant, but afterwards they overdid it in politeness, and I found Leyland had given them a hint. One of these men had been a clergyman, the other an officer in the army. Leyland was as much put out by them and their ways as I was, but he put up with them much more quiescently, and would on no account turn them away.

On the 29th our visitors declared their intention of riding home, so for the sake of the ride we said we would convoy them as far as the river. We tied up for them some bread and beef and hard-boiled eggs, and they had their flask of spirits. The morning was lovely and the valley beautiful, and when we bade the gentlemen adieu, Leyland proposed our riding on to Durban that I might make the acquaintance of Mrs. Collins, whose husband was postmaster, and one of the gentlemen who called with the Governor. We did so, and I passed a very pleasant, chatty day. Mrs. Collins is a genuine Scotchwoman, and insisted on my staying and dining with her. I did so, and it was late when Leyland came for me. The darkness, which comes on so suddenly in that country, overtook us as we entered the bush path. Leyland had fortunately white trousers on, which I followed closely, for I could not see to guide my horse, and let it choose its own steps, and he kept me talking the whole way to assure himself of my being close and safe. The glowworm shone under a bush occasionally, and here and there the trees opened to the sky, when the stars peeped down upon us, but the moon was late in rising, and we found our people assembled on our arrival to know what could have kept *me* so late, though it was not much past seven o'clock. There is no twilight, and bush paths are apt to awaken the nerves. There

is a solitary feeling about them. When once you enter you feel you must go through, as through a tunnel.

Tigers sometimes cross the path, and are often heard in the evenings, but they are said to fly from man generally unless hungry or provoked. There have been two or three fights lately, however, in the open valley. A man took a pack-ox to the well for water when a tiger sprang at the ox, for though the valley is open it is bounded by bush. The man turned the ox quickly round and the tiger disappeared in the bush, but the man went home without the water, and the ox was uninjured. He was our friend Mrs. Bowen's servant. Our neighbour, Mrs. Galliers, was carrying her washing to Mrs. Bowen's, when she saw a tigress and two cubs lying under a bush. She was frightened, but they did not touch her, so she goes backwards and forwards daily as usual.

May, 1853.—The weather is lovely at this season in Natal. Our winter is approaching, and the mornings and evenings are even cold. We are glad to light a fire in our parlour grate, though more for the cheerfulness it causes than from the necessity for heat. We have had a very enjoyable visit of a week from Mr. and Mrs. M. It has been good for all of us in affording pleasant rides, and chats, and walks. The lady is an open, unpretending, matter-of fact, sensible woman, clever, but not highly educated. She tells me she is a poor curate's daughter, and there being a very large family she proposed doing something for herself, as companion or nursery governess, and making her own way in the world,—in other words, *bettering* herself. She had an active mind and healthy person, and she felt she should be happier with some stated duties to do, so she came out with a lady, and was very happy and quite content, till a gentleman, with whom she had never spoken, proposed to her in writing, saying he wanted a wife; he had heard her lead the singing in church on an emergency, and he felt sure so good a leader of the 100th Psalm would make a good wife, and he was willing to take her for his. Most properly she carried

his letter at once to the lady she lived with, but she took her own way, and after sundry objections being overruled by the gentleman, they were married in a fortnight! After the deed was fairly done she felt so unhappy that next day she asked her husband to let her go quietly away and she would never trouble him more, but he declined his liberty, so she had to make the best of it, and in eight months became reconciled to her lot, and the bargain (for such it was on both sides) turned out better than either had a right to expect. She said for a few days at first after her acquaintance, she used to look "so hard" at the brothers (there were three) to know which was the one to be her husband.

We thought we were very comfortably off for servants, but poor Mrs. Welsh finds that she cannot attend both to my cooking and her own children, so Welsh says they must leave at the end of their second month. It is well our visitors will have left ere then, but I cannot wonder they should wish to go if they can find other employment, not requiring her to act as servant.

Sunday, 15*th*.—When I rose I found the room swept and breakfast-things laid, but no sign of Mrs. Welsh, nor did I see her again. She never came to say good-bye, but took the children away early to save too heavy a load next day. Poor things! I doubt they will be no better off elsewhere; with us they had house-rent free, vegetables, and wages, and she told me they had known what it was to want bread. When their money is all spent they will wish themselves back. Their going so suddenly, however, begins a new era in my life, for I have no servant provided, and Ginger, who spoke English well, and was really handy for a Caffre, set off to his craal, because he did not like Mrs. Welsh, and would not work under her; so he went home to his wife to be a gentleman, as he said to Mrs. Welsh, and he carried his head like an independent man, and was as proud in his own barbarous way as Mrs. Welsh herself.

Our present Caffre, called Ebenezer, cannot speak or

understand a word of English, and is very slow. I get a little help from old Gudgeon at times, but he is working on the farm, and Mrs. Smith does what she can, but she has her own house and family to look after, so I am working myself, and I tell Ebenezer in English and point to what he must do at the same time, and hope he will thus learn the meaning of a few English words. For some little time I must be my own servant, and for my future satisfaction in so unusual a situation, I must jot down a kind of diary of my various work.

Sunday, 15*th*.—After Mrs. Welsh's departure I made the coffee, saw the eggs boiled, and all other necessaries for breakfast, and wiped the dishes while Ebenezer washed up. The children soon came and said their Catechism, &c., and then we read the Morning Church Service, and walked about the grounds. Mrs. Smith kindly cooked our fowl and cabbage at her own house and sent them over for dinner. Ebenezer, under my close surveillance, boiled the soup, rice, and potatoes. When nearly ready, a neighbour, Mr. Edmonstone, walked in; I felt sure he was come to dinner, but discovered he had come by invitation, and Leyland had forgotten all about it. Fortunately the dinner did very well, and Mrs. Smith accidentally walking over, waited upon us and washed up, after making and serving coffee. The afternoon was fine, and when our guest rose to go, Leyland proposed my getting my hat, and we would take him through the new bush path. Finding I must change my shoes, I told the gentlemen to go on, and I would follow directly and meet my husband on his return, as we must not delay the gentleman, when darkness might suddenly overtake him in the bush path. I followed, but fearing to go alone into the bush, turned; meantime my husband feared for me, and he turned, and somehow we missed meeting. He looked in the house but I was not there, thought I must have gone the other way, and followed hard down the hill in search; I was not there; up again to get Smith to help him to seek, when by good luck I met him in a terrible fright, and we could not understand how we had missed

each other: we turned in and spent the evening reading "Mrs. Fry's Life."

Monday, 16*th*.—Rose early, swept out the room and made breakfast ready, Ebenezer attending to the fire and pans, and here I may say that I never saw a Caffre's equal in making and keeping up a wood fire on the ground. I let him try to help me to make the bed, but he gave me my full share of the work, even of the turning of the heavy mattress. Next I prepared the clothes for the wash; then rested and mended socks or read the newspaper, after which it was time to prepare dinner; and though we had only soup, curried fowl, and vegetables, it took a great deal of cooking, with the fire on the ground outside, and an ignorant, lazy Caffre to aid, who required each order told separately by pointing at the moment it should be done. I could have done it alone quicker, only the smoke blinds one in looking into a pan. A Caffre seems never to feel it. Old Gudgeon came and washed up and helped a little, and in the evening after coffee we read "Nigel."

Thursday.—Mr. Edmonstone came to breakfast, and he and my husband rode off to see some land, intending to be back for dinner, which I had ready at five. At six they made their appearance. Leyland's horse had come down with him, and crushed some amatingoolas (a fine acid fruit of a rose colour, shaped like a plum), which he was bringing home for me. His horse had been lost for an hour or two, which had delayed them, and they were as hungry as hunters, having eaten nothing since they left me after breakfast. They praised my tomato-soup, asked who had made the pie, it was so good, and all the rolled pudding was eaten up. I felt quite flattered in my new character of cook, but I must remember the water fully boils next time before I put my pudding in it, for some of the paste stuck to the cloth it was boiled in.

CHAPTER VI.

Friday.—My husband is quite shaken and poorly with the fall he got with his horse, and on the sofa all day, and was quite edified watching me going through all my household work, and teaching Ebenezer to sweep the floor, and other little things. He told me it was lucky my house was no larger, or I should never get through my work. I quite agree, for it is large enough for our wants, and I rather enjoy this picnicing kind of life for a time, especially as I find time to draw a flower now and then, when some new and beautiful one is put into my hand from the bush or the fields. Rather late Mr. Collins rode up, I feared to dinner; however, we should have had enough and good, though no show, and I have learned, as Mr. Walker said I soon should, not to try to present dinners as in England. I had made a very good pudding, and, in fact, as he rode up he found me carrying it into the house, smelling very fragrant. It was a composition of my own, made of a number of good things mixed together, for as we can't get milk, our receipts for good puddings are rarely of any use. The cooking is all done outside the house, while the stores are kept in the house, which causes a constant trotting to and fro.

Mr. Collins did not stay to dinner, but he came back next morning to breakfast, and amongst other good things he got a Chinese goose-egg, as large as two turkey's eggs, of a fine flavour, and the white transparent like a duck's egg. The geese were a present from the captain of a trading-vessel from China. The gentlemen went a long ride, and got a good dinner with Mr. Wray.

Sunday, May 22nd.—My dear brother and sister's wedding anniversary, and we drank their healths in a bottle of champagne, for it so chanced we had quite a party at dinner. After early morning work, the children and Gudgeon came to join in our morning service. Gudgeon was helping me to get dinner ready for ourselves and two gentlemen who had been verbally invited, when Leyland came and whispered that Mr. Field (customs-collector) and another gentleman had just ridden up to take pot luck with us. Presently Mr. Milner rode up with the same social intention, so here were five men besides ourselves come to a hungry dinner in the middle of the day. They went down to see the state of the sugar-canes, leaving Gudgeon, myself, and the Caffre to make ready for them ; and Mrs. Smith, seeing all the gentlemen pass her house with my husband, soon ran over to help me, but she also had two chance visitors for their own midday roast of beef, so we had all plenty to do. Mrs. Smith took all the weight off my shoulders, superintending the culinary department, and she brought with her six eggs for an omelette. I prepared the table, and Gudgeon waited in a clean shirt and his greasy, dirty only pair of trousers, for the silly man sold all his clothes for drink, and now is to be made to suffer. Mrs. Smith lends him an old shirt of her husband's, while his *one* is being washed. His shirt was clean if not his trousers, and the honest old fellow was in his element, bustling about as smartly as if he were head waiter at an hotel in gay clothes and a clean napkin in his hand, and dinner was excellent and abundant.

On the 25th we rode over to spend the day at Springfield with Mr. and Mrs. Milner, and were not allowed to return, Mrs. Milner insisting that the ride would be too much for me ; so we stayed that night and the next, in order that the gentlemen might ride up the coast to visit Mr. Miller's sugar plantation, and ascertain if it would be possible for a boat to navigate the Tongaat River, and thus aid the sugar transport. Mrs. Miller was our fellow-voyager from England, so Leyland went

on to call on her, and found her very comfortable in a good house. He returned to Springfield late on Saturday night, after a hard ride of 104 miles. "Compensation" is the name Mr. Miller calls his estate. I had returned home on Friday, under Mr. James's escort, and had taken a bad cold, suffering from tooth-ache, ear-ache, and head-ache, so I was glad to be alone and at home again, and was quite poorly on Sunday afternoon. The steamer with the monthly (or two-monthly as it has been) mail came in, and we had a large budget of home letters.

June, 1853.—This month commenced with writing to answer our English letters, and by way of a little relaxation, on the second day Leyland and I made an experiment in manufacturing some arrowroot from the roots the wild pigs had left us. We were at the busiest, sleeves tucked up to the elbows (mine had been up some time, making a pie for dinner and mixing bread), when up rode a smart man in white trousers and looking very grand. This was the joiner come to glaze the windows, as dashing as any gentleman who comes, and far more so than most, for it seems to be the pride of gentlemen in a colony to throw off both dress and manners.

Our arrowroot turned out so well that we sent some samples to our friends in England, wholly unadulterated. Arrowroot would grow well in Natal if the pigs would let it alone; the bucks eat the young green tops, and the pigs go to the roots.

The glass was put into our windows on Friday, the 3rd of June, we having been near a year in the house with nothing but calico in our window-frames. The glass is a wonderful improvement, showing our beautiful landscape on both sides of the house. It is astonishing how safe we have felt with so little protection; tigers and hyænas are heard prowling about, and their foot-marks seen in the garden walks in the morning, yet we do not meet with them face to face. On Sunday there was one frightening the monkeys out of their wits just a stone's throw from the house. We could not see it, but the little Smiths, who were saying their catechism,

could not keep their attention fixed for listening and looking out of the window. But I never go alone into the bush paths or anywhere far from home. We have splendid sunsets throwing their rich warm tints over hills and valley, and the scenery requires them, for there are no beautiful and varied autumnal colours as in cold countries.

Friday, June 3rd.—Mr. Field and Mr. Eastwood came to dinner before leaving the colony. We gave them a fine large wild goose and a bottle of champagne to wish them a good voyage. Mr. Field is an old and respected colonist. We were speaking of the natives, when he told me that he had lately had a little boy of eight years *given* to him by the child's father. This poor child had unfortunately a large appetite, and the Caffres feared their mealies would be eaten up too soon. They therefore laid a plan to desert the child as follows: On crossing a very deep river they left the poor little fellow behind, thinking he could not follow through the water, but in despair or courage the boy dashed in and bobbed up and down like a cork. He would inevitably have been drowned had not one Caffre, with more feeling than the rest, gone back into the river and pulled him ashore. Mr. Field met the party, and learning all that had happened, accepted the gift of the boy. Was it not a Joseph sold by his brethren? Mr. Field says he is quick and clever.

The steamer sailed on Sunday again. Leyland went to the point to see her off, and found the Governor and a number of other gentlemen assembled, to see Colonel Boys and others start. He brought back three gentlemen to partake of my giblet pie, which I had made ready for the oven before our morning prayers and the children's catechism, and William Smith, who is becoming very clever under his mother's tuition, cooked a beefsteak for us. Gudgeon waited again, and, having had a present that morning of a pair of Leyland's old trousers, he felt quite smart. He is behaving admirably at present, but I live in terror for the next outbreak. We could ill spare him just now,

without any other white servant to attend to the house and horse. We were scarcely in bed that night, when Leyland exclaimed, "Those nasty oxen are in the garden again." Out he ran and chased all the animals he saw off, but next morning found that five had been left to do 5*l.* worth of damage.

I have taken to riding lately, and find it agrees with me. I rode twenty miles one day without it making me in the least stiff, so we rode into Durban the following day to get a strap on my saddle rectified. My pony is rather a nice one. It came to us as part of a bad debt, a poor, half-starved, sore-backed, miserable animal, full of "ticks;" but rest and better feeding have effected a wonderful change, and it astonished Leyland the other day by running away with him, for which act he said it rose 5*l.* in value. I hope it will not run away with me! It took me home that evening in double quick time—but I must relate the great event of that day.

A buck hunt was to take place on Mr. Milner's land suitable for that sport, and I was invited to accompany my husband and spend the day with Mrs. Milner, so we rode over eight miles before breakfast, and found ourselves the first on the ground. Presently the gentlemen began to assemble, but the Caffres engaged to beat the bush were not forthcoming; they waited fully two hours for these important gentlemen, amusing themselves by examining each other's guns and looking at a young lion in a cage, just fresh from the free woods (which would not be an agreeable neighbour), and finally making sore havoc in Mrs. Milner's beautiful pork pie. At last the Caffres were announced, and we went out to see these wild, naked men of the woods, in their beads and cowtails; their hair curiously dressed up from their heads, or curled close, or shaven off, with a sort of indiarubber-ring (such it seemed) round the crown, their knobkerries and assegais in hand. They ranged themselves in front of the house, and commenced singing and dancing in their measured and indolent, yet heating manner. Their movements never take them

out of one spot, but by degrees every joint of the body, and every limb, get put into motion, till the perspiration streams from their bodies, and they get into a state of great excitement. Their singing is not altogether discordant, though I could not distinguish a tune, but it was wild and warlike. Their captain was with them, a man of some consequence as Caffre magistrate. He wears a thick blanket coat, loosely strapped round his waist, bordered with red and blue, and is a stout, strong-looking man. Presently they all wound down the hill into the valley, the gentlemen on horseback, and here it was that my husband rode my pony to keep his horse fresh for a longer ride next day; mine seemed by its extra good spirits to have enjoyed its day's work. The gentlemen got good sport at last, bringing down four fine bucks, and we returned home quite pleased with our day of pleasure.

The closing scene I must not omit to describe; I called it a pigmy bull-fight, but perhaps it was a fairer game than that. There were near 100 Caffres; the gentlemen gave them two oxen for their supper, but instead of taking the doomed creatures quietly to slaughter, the Caffres enclosed each ox in a ring, sang and danced round it, thrusting their assegais towards it, and evidently making it the subject of their song. The poor animal, driven half-mad, tried in vain to escape; it was always forced back into the ring again. At last, making a sudden bound, it leaped through and fled off up the valley, pursued by a few Caffres to bring it back, which they did after a race of some miles. We did not stay to see the end, having no ambition to be in at the death. A few Caffre women arrived to share in the feast; one of them was a fat, saucy, care-for-nothing dunce. She wore a cotton blanket tightened across her shoulders, like a lady's shawl *à la negligée*, which displayed a goodly lump of fat all round, while her pug face and stumpy legs, bare to the calf, corresponded with the whole. The moon was nearly at the full, so we ventured to stay till dusk, and on entering the bush path I was reminded of a scene I remembered when a

girl I was taken once to Vauxhall Gardens, the branches meeting over our heads, and all so darkly light, with the moon scarce visible. Presently Leyland, who always goes through the bush a step in advance of me to lead, set up a shout and a howl, to warn the wild beasts, I supposed, that we were wide awake. I felt no fear, and being deaf heard no uncommon sound, but I found he had heard the voice of a tiger rather close to us and wished to frighten it away. We reached home without accident, found Gudgeon had quite given us up and was preparing to mount guard by taking his mat to sleep behind the front door, with a drawn sword placed at his side.

I am told that a tiger will rarely attack a clothed man, but it will sometimes a naked Caffre, who has a strong scent about him. Some of our Caffres have been terribly frightened. One, whose duty it was to go after the cattle, had been so terrified by a tiger growling at him that he took a lighted torch to set fire to the grass and reeds, which were high enough to hide any animal. We, unknowing of all this, were tempted by the lovely day to take a longer stroll than usual, Leyland desiring to show me over more of the Feniscowles estate. When down among the long grass Leyland's quick eye caught sight of a tiger's back, and immediately afterwards the grass became lighted up as if by magic, but no harm followed. The bush in Natal must be much lower than Australian bush, for no horseman could ride through it unless a path was first cut; it is so completely entangled that it makes a famous cover for wild beasts.

We went to a grand ball during this month, which I really must describe, it being so very unusual an affair, and so superior to any yet given in Durban. It was a stroke of policy in one of the magistrates to overcome some ill-will and jealousies that had been growing and talked about. We had not thought of going to the ball, but Leyland came home on the day, and told me my horse would be at the door in two hours, and he had engaged a bedroom in town for us, where we should dress and sleep. So we got out our dress clothes, put them in a portmanteau,

and sent a Caffre straight off with it; took a bite of bread and beef in our fingers, saddled, and were off; Leyland carrying my ornaments in a flat basket over his shoulder. We found a comfortable little room and a mutton chop awaiting us. We dressed and drove to the ball in the only van in the place, which was engaged to do duty all night, and was in consequence bringing and taking parties to and from till five or six in the morning. I was quite surprised with the elegant and extensive arrangements. There were three dancing-rooms, decorated with flags and wild flowers; beams across the ceiling were hung with festoons; the windows which opened to the ground were all taken out, and the wide verandah outside covered in and seated all round, while the music was so placed, centrally, that it served equally for all the dancing-rooms. Supper was in a more distant part of the house, while tea, coffee, negus, &c., were supplied all the evening.

Some of the ladies were very good-looking, and nicely dressed in pink tarlatans, white muslins, and silks; one lady in a rich velvet dress. For such a mixed set of people, and the first ball of such pretensions, it was surprising how everything went off. One of the prettiest and best-dressed ladies, who came rather late, I recognized as our landlady, who danced all the evening; but told one of her partners she was so fatigued cooking for the supper, that she could hardly dance at all! Had she been other than a Yankee she would have dropped the cook when she entered the ball-room. But she is not without merit; her husband is too deaf to earn a living, so she does it for him, by keeping a first-class boarding-house, which she manages so well that some think she must have been brought up to it, though she would not have us think so. There were all classes of people present, even to the police!—150 guests were invited, and where so many were found I know not. The night became very wet, and the one van was in such requisition, having been previously engaged, that it was hopeless our getting it, so we made up our minds and remained until half-past five, joining in the Scotch reel,

and finally walked home to our lodging, the rain having nearly ceased. We had not far to go, but in any other place our shoes and stockings would have been wet through. Here, however, the loose, thirsty sand drank up all the rain, as if it fell through a sieve, and we just waded through the moist ground with merely dirtying the outside of my velvet boots and the edge of my petticoat, my dress being tucked up under my shawl. We met for breakfast at ten, and rode home in the afternoon. So great was the excitement produced in Durban by so uncommon an entertainment, that one lady, rather than miss the treat, took her baby of three months old (which she feared to leave so long) with her, and kept the child with its nurse in the ante-room till five o'clock in the morning! I called a few days after to leave my own and my husband's cards; it was well I did so, for I found the lady of the house seated in state to receive callers, after her ball, with her eye-glass fixed on the door at each new entrance.

CHAPTER VII.

I BEGIN to like my pony very much. We rode out to a sugar plantation ten miles distant one day, through a wild and pretty country, but no great cultivation. We passed a settlement of Caffre craals, which look like so many dirty haycocks. They are made of reeds and mud, in a circle, wherein is their cattle-yard, their huts or craals forming a boundary and protection to the cattle in the centre. When they light their fires on the floors (hardened with well rubbed in cow-dung) a cloud of smoke issues from the hole by which they enter. We found Mr. and Mrs. Jeffels, to whose sugar plantation we rode, a very hospitable couple. They gave us dinner, and Mr. Lloyd, the clergyman, happening to arrive, joined the party, and six sat down to a substantial meal of pork and pie. The lady showed me her garden, in which they are rearing all manner of tropical fruits and plants. I saw ginger, pines, orange, lemon, and lime trees, cocoa-nut, bananas, and more common vegetables, all in an infant but healthy state. The sugar-cane of three or four months' growth was very fine. Mr. Jeffels is a hard-working, indefatigable gentleman ; brought up for the church, but here labouring with his own hands and feet as hard as any workman. His father, a clergyman, had fifty pounds a year ! The son preferred the bush life, with a good, faithful wife. Their daughter Laura seemed an intelligent, useful child, of eleven years, speaking the Caffre language too well, for I am told it is only learned at the expense of purity of mind. She told me that the name of some white birds we had observed amongst the cattle as we rode along, was the tick-bird, from their living off the ticks they pick out of the cattle, and that, in conse-

quence, they were so much valued as never to be shot. The Rev. Mr. Lloyd had been among the missionaries at the opening of a church for the coloured population, and had been much gratified by seeing the efforts made for the spread of Christianity. But all I hear of these missionary efforts, however great, is unsatisfactory in the result, and it can scarcely be otherwise, while the Caffre child, brought up by itself to look after itself, becomes thoroughly selfish. The missionaries (as I was told) have to pay so much a week or month to the parents to induce them to send their children to school, and when the pay stops the child is removed. My old neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, tells me that such was the case in England a few years ago; that the sister of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, wishing to do good, made a school for little children, but until she paid the parents twopence a week she only got four or five scholars. At the end of two years she told the parents she would teach their children if they liked to send them, but that she could not afford to pay any longer. By this time, however, the parents began to see the advantage the children gained in moral training, and were glad to send them.

On the 18th of June, Mr. and Mrs. Collins, Captain Robertson, and the young lady he is about to marry, came to spend the day and fish in our lake, but they arrived so late that they had only time to go and look at the fish, and we had to hurry coffee after our dinner to get the ladies through the bush in twilight, of which there is very little in this country, and it is near our shortest day. What had we for dinner? Soup, hot beef, cold fowls, tongue, yam, rice, pumpkin tops, and roly-poly pudding, made of the last jar of English gooseberries by my own clean hands, for I make all the pastry and bread myself, and examine every joint of meat that comes to the house, or it would never keep twelve hours sweet. I begin to examine my hands with alarm, lest traces of unusual work be left on them, and tell tales if ever I go again into civilized society, besides spoiling the fineness of their touch for more

delicate work. But our farmer's wife gives me comfort, assuring me they will come all right again after a time of idleness. She adds, "You ladies wear gloves to keep your hands white; *we* wear them to hide our dirty hands." I have always had an objection to seeing gloves worn while eating in company, and shall have it doubly in future after this vivid remark followed by an example; but I mean to strike work before I reach this last point.

Our weather is charmingly cool in this our winter season. We frequently enjoy a fire in dear Margaret's grate, which looks so cheerful and homelike that we often burn one for no other reason, and boil our eggs or toast our bread, and talk of home. The sun does not rise till about seven o'clock, and I really enjoy wearing my woollen stockings (by the way Mrs. Jeffels told me she never wears any stockings at all in Africa, and finds it far the best plan). To-day has been much warmer, even hot at midday; but it will be cold again at night, and our fire will look like a friend.

June 21st.—I had mixed the bread and had set it to rise before a nice fire, when the Rev. Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Row rode up to call, on their way to a funeral. This sounds harsh, but it was not with harsh feeling—distances make the difference. Mr. Lloyd's first remark was, "Now, I like this," but whether he meant the fire or the bread-pan before it I am not sure; my thoughts went instantly to the bread, and I made an excuse that it was the warmest place for it.

We rode into Durban next day to see a Frenchwoman who had applied for our place. She was every way French, politely intimating that it was our place only she would condescend to take. She fancied we should live like princes and pay accordingly. "Me work all day; me do everyting, me wash muslins, me do all dis," touching her ruffles, "me cook, me make dresses, oh! everyting." I left her to consider whether my terms would make it worth her while to leave the town and her trade of dressmaking, and I heard no more of her.

We rode on to the "Point" and got home again at

dinner-time, Mr. James, the manager, following and dining with us.

June 23rd.—We had a gentleman's party; a Mr. Saunders, with a broken arm, Mr. Robinson, the newspaper editor, and two captains of vessels. They got a capital dinner, the soup, pie, and tart all made by my own hands, fowls and tongue dressed up again from day before. The gentlemen seemed to enjoy themselves, and Mr. —— stayed all night.

Sunday, 26th.—Just after our morning prayers a Caffre brought a note announcing that one of Leyland's boats (named after me) had gone down in the gale at night with a cargo of mealies. The boat was recovered next day, but with considerable expense, though no worse in itself. The cargo will be a loss to some one, and they will put it on my husband's shoulders if there is the slightest cobweb of a chance.

The *Jane Morice* was announced outside, but could not get inside the bar during the gale. The *Jane Morice* brings a small box for me, and who does not know the pleasure of receiving a box from England? But who does know the pleasure of unpacking one filled with presents from home like those who live in the wilderness of Africa, far, far away from early friends?

June 28th.—Leyland has twice said to me, "You must tell Mary about your ride to-day," and as it has been a very busy day, I will rest myself by writing an account of it. Breakfast cleared away, the bread mixed and set to rise for baking, we had family prayers, and then I let down a tuck of my alpaca skirt to wear as a riding habit (my linen one being in the wash). This done, I set about to iron some muslins, which I cannot send to a common laundress, and before half finished our horses came to the door. We snatched a bite of bread and jam, the last of the pots of black currants put up so carefully for my especial use on board ship,—the best black currants that ever were, and perfectly sweet and good to the last. I gave Ebenezer directions to bake the bread during our absence, trusting to get back in

time to order dinner, as a Caffre does not understand two orders at once.

The object of our ride was to see a small farm that had lately become my property, named Briercliffe. We mounted, and my pony was in such good spirits that having to walk great part of a rough, steep road and over fields, quite fretted it. After reaching the farm, examining the land and garden, and bringing away some cuttings of a lovely English rose, we turned homewards, first seeing the beautiful little streamlet which supplies the land and cottage with water. The stream runs over broad, flat rocks sheltered by trees, and in going down over the slippery, dry grass with loose dry stones, I was strangely reminded of our going down Vesuvius, though where the similarity existed I cannot tell. Leyland's arm was a very good support, however, in the steep, loose descent. It would make a beautiful spot for a picnic party, dinner-table and seats all there of Nature's placing: pure water from the river, a beautiful fern hanging about, trees for shade, and in their season plenty of lovely wild flowers. In winter there are only a few, one of which we brought home, and I have since made a rude sketch of it in coloured chalks.

We were joined in our ride home by Mr. Wray, who went with us to "Sea View," mentioned in the bishop's tour, of which our Feniscowles once formed a part. It had belonged to a Mrs. Dunn, now dead, who made an exquisite garden. The property is beautifully situated; but the house, a long, low, dark place, is choked with trees, and feels damp and dismal. The garden, however, must have been a treat to walk in, and might easily become so again were the weeds removed, which vie with the plants for possession. The splendid orange trees of ten years' growth are full of grand fruit. The trees are wide and bushy, tapering like a cone towards the top, and at least twenty feet in height. Lemon and lime trees are also very fine, and there is a whole grove of bananas. The coffee berry was dying in abundance from the plants being choked with weeds, and date trees were suffering from the same cause. It was

melancholy to see such waste and neglect. We saw a famously strong prickly hedge that intertwines its branches and bears a nut, called the hyccup nut, from the effect that follows the eating too many of its fruit. When amongst the bananas I could not help thinking of the Swiss family Robinson and the monkeys: the scene was so oriental, and the trees so well suited for the tricks of these playful animals. Mr. Brickhill (the present tenant), on Mr. Wray's suggestion, sent for a hatchet and cut open one of the trunks of the banana trees lying useless on the ground, to show us the inside, of which rope can be made, and which tastes like a cucumber. The fibres are very fine and strong, and this still more recalled the story of the Swiss family Robinson on the desert island, finding implements in God's natural creation.

The grounds about "Sea View" were so inviting that I had to remind Leyland the sun would soon set (it sets at five). So we again mounted our steeds and set off home, parting with Mr. Wray where our paths diverged. We rode home quickly, and I instantly went to the larder, which consists of a meat safe on the coolest side at the end of the house. The underdone beef of yesterday was quickly put into the carrot soup and made hot, pumpkins, rice, and potatoes were soon on the fire to boil, and we had dinner in half an hour, "The best," Leyland said, "he had eaten for many a day." In the meantime, he had planted some limes, verbena, and hyccup nuts, the spoils of our day's work; and "Sea View" oranges made us a pleasant dessert. The bread left for Ebenezer to bake turned out so good that I tell Leyland we have nearly eaten half a quartern loaf at tea, upon which he tells me I should not make it so good. Tea ended, I took my flower and wild berry to commemorate them on paper. We have drunk our dear mother's health to-night; indeed, our usual toast is, "Your mother and mine," and we drink the dear toast in any kind of liquid, from tea to whisky toddy sometimes. To-night it was in sherry negus, with nutmeg and lime, which Leyland brewed very good.

June 30th.—Rode into Durban and spent the day with Mrs. Collins, and as we were returning at 4.30 p.m., two gentlemen came up with us on the road on their way out to dine with us and I did not know it. However, I had made a good curry pie in the morning, which Ebenezer had baked, and a pudding the day before, which was soon warmed up, and we did capitally.

As we passed the church in Durban (or rather the chapel-school, where church is held till ours is built) a number of people and some soldiers were in the yard. The court-house floors not being safe, a serious trial was being held in the school-house. A Caffre woman, named Pflatta, with three Caffre men and one white man, had murdered her horrid drunken husband. Pflatta had often threatened to poison him, but at last they seem all to have joined to strangle the fellow, and after stripping him they threw him into the river, to make it appear he had drowned himself while crossing; but the cheat was too clumsy, and all—as bad as they can be—are sentenced to death.

July 2nd.—Leyland rode to see some sugar planting, which he has bought, at Springfield, with which at present he is greatly pleased. It is a bold undertaking, and will be the making of him or his ruin.

I was watching for him towards the dinner hour, when he rode up accompanied by two ladies and a gentleman, all expecting dinner. However, they were quite content with boiled beef and soup, and started for Durban when almost dark, neither lady the least afraid of riding through the bush path by night. One of them was Mrs. King, the young lady at whose marriage we had been present a few months before. Leyland went with them to get our letters, the steamer having arrived, and when he returned was so thoroughly done up with his day of riding that he went off to bed and fell fast asleep without reading his letters, only knowing from me that his mother was better. Next day Mr. and Mrs. Collins rode out, and we ladies had a grand examination of the contents of my little pretty tin box from home. The bonnet and the head-dress were duly tried on and

approved; the love and care that had chosen and sent all were discussed, even to the sewing up of the padlock. What busy hands and what affectionate thoughts accompanied each article as it was placed in its nook and taken out thence? Had its contents been ten times more valuable, they could not have been more cared for than these.

Mrs. Collins had also got a box from home, and we went to see her and examined her treasures, and brought away a slice of a magnificent Scotch bun which formed part of them, and which must have weighed fifty or sixty pounds, and so good.

July 4th.—The house was getting a regular turn over and cleaning. Ebenezer had just washed the floor, and every bit of furniture was out of its proper place. I was sitting mending some things when Mr. Ross rode up to call, but was too polite to enter, for which I was not sorry. There was a great deal still to do, and I think a pie to be made.

Tuesday, 5th.—I was setting out to call on old Mrs. Bowen, when a gentleman of some sort, but I could not exactly fix his position, came up and asked for "Mr. Feilden." "He is not at home! This is a Durban day, with the steamer going out." The man looked puzzled and disappointed, so I asked if Mr. Feilden was acquainted with him?

"Oh yes!"

"Your name, sir?"

Mr. Hart presented his card.

"Would you walk in?"

"No, thank you; perhaps I may call again," and he walked away.

When Leyland came home in the afternoon I found he had invited the man to dinner and forgotten all about it, and Mr. Hart, not knowing our dinner hour, thought he would come in good time at any rate, and so made his appearance at 11 a.m.

I made my call on Mrs. Bowen, whom I found very low and seemingly "put out." I took no notice, but went on chatting with her, encouraging her to talk of

former days, and left her after an hour and a half quite cheerful and happy. I must make a *duty* of going to see her as often as possible, for she has none near to care for her, and she lives entirely alone. Her gardener, who does what little cooking she requires, lives in an outhouse, and for some reason or other she will not have a woman to live in the house with her. People say she is rich—I do not think so. I think she has a small annuity, and with her economical ways it makes her independent, which of all positions is the one she most enjoys. Her richly stored mind, her romance, her poetry, and her love of nature, as seen in her garden, make her independent of society, while her temper makes her very unwilling to submit to or encounter the vulgarity she meets with in a colony, and I must say she has offended more than one by her cutting and satirical remarks. But Mrs. Bowen is no common person, and the better I know her the more I love and venerate her.

She told me of her former intimacy with the Archbishop of Canterbury when both were young, and dwelt with evident pleasure on the recollections his name called up; both clever, both fond of intellectual pursuits, it was talent appreciating talent.

Coming home after this charming chat, to prepare dinner for Leyland and Mr. Griffiths, I found Mr. Wray added to the party, but as there was plenty to eat it was "all right." Dainties are not expected, and we have generally abundance of delicious fruit.

Mr. Wray entertained us with a play of his own composition, reciting the ballad from which he made it. The gentlemen found the fire so pleasant, and sat chatting so long, and the night was so dark, that they finally decided to stay and share the room upstairs. The following night it was shared by two others, and Mr. King coming to breakfast, in order to join the party going to see the sugar plantation (just now the rage and prime interest of the colonists), we had a large party to make scones for. Hungry men are easily pleased, provided there is plenty, and we gave them hashed meat

and rice and eggs, of which we have great abundance, with coffee, but no milk, alas!

The gentlemen rode off, and I was left for the day to make things straight and then take my sewing on the sofa and rest. The following two days Leyland and I spent in manufacturing arrowroot from the roots grown in our garden, and produced a small quantity, very fine. The process is simple, but requires time, patience, and neatness. We first grate the root into water, then wash it, put it through a funnel to separate the coarser fibre, then wash the whole again and again, strain through a muslin or sieve of various fineness until it will pass through fine cambric, when the pure white arrowroot sinks to the bottom of the basin, and after it has quite settled the water is strained off it. The arrowroot is then placed in the sun to dry, and the manufacture is complete.

CHAPTER VIII.

July 10th.—Our Sundays seem fated to bring visitors. I had hoped for a quiet day, but we had scarcely finished the morning service and heard the young Smiths say their catechism, when that same Mr. Hart appeared whom I had so ungraciously permitted to walk off a few days before. He dined with us, and also Mr. Edmonston, who has a standing invitation during his wife's absence. I was washing a cabbage to quicken Ebenezer's movements, and to ensure the cabbage being clean, when the latter walked up. I simply told him what I was about and why I did it myself, but old Gudgeon coming up just then took it off my hands, and we soon had a comfortable dinner. While at it Mr. Collins rode out to invite us to be present at a marriage at his house, which was to be solemnized after the Scotch form on the Wednesday following, and as we have already a ball at Mrs. Millar's on hand, we shall feel quite dissipated this week.

We rode in early and helped to decorate the handsome bride's cake, and next decorated ourselves, having sent our clothes per Caffre. The bride looked very pretty in her orange-flower wreath, and the bridegroom (Captain Robertson) very happy of course.

There being no carriage in Durban but that horrid shaky van, the happy couple decided to ride home at night quietly on horseback, and we had a very merry party, with a beautiful feast. The party kept it up with dancing till two in the morning.

We had rather an absurd adventure riding into Durban. My pony put its foot in a hole and stumbled, and I came over its head on the soft sandy grass.

Leyland jumped off his horse to help me, when both horses cantered away to their stable in the town, leaving us behind. We seated ourselves on a bank, and after awhile Tyzack appeared, riding Leyland's horse and leading mine. He said when the saddled horses walked into the stable he knew what must have happened, so brought them instantly back to find us. We remained in Durban three nights, occupying a bedroom in Mr. Koch's house, while visiting Mrs. Collins, and next day there were a good many callers. Amongst others was Captain Stephenson, who told us he had arrived at our house the night before after sunset, with tired horses, and had taken possession for the night, old Gudgeon making them comfortable in our sitting-room with a good fire, before which they (there were three gentlemen and a dog) slept, Gudgeon, who was left in charge, sleeping on the floor beside them. They made themselves very much at home, eating and drinking whatever they found, Mrs. Smith sending them over a pie and scones from the farm, and I had left the key in the door of my bedroom that the floor might be washed in our absence, and this they entered to get at the wine! After chatting awhile, we all went out for a walk to make a call, Captain Stephenson with us, being most polite to me, to curry favour, I suppose, for he is not a great favourite of mine. He kept his face turned towards me, as he walked forward, when all at once he plopped into a deep ditch of water up to his hips. I thought for a moment it was a well, and that he was sinking; he grasped at the sand and stunted weeds, and held on till he had, as he said, "got his laugh out;" I, all the while, I must confess, laughing at the ludicrous accident that placed the big man in so mean a predicament, and rather on the whole, if the truth must be told, enjoying it.

Mrs. Millar's ball came off on the 13th. It was held in Mr. Millar's store instead of the house, and thus we had a beautiful ball-room and supper-room, seated for eighty persons without crowding. The long room was lighted by six wooden chandeliers, made for the occasion, fitted

with wax candles, and all very brilliant and elegant, the walls covered with calico and decorated with flags and flowers, evergreens, &c. The end of the ball-room was carpeted, with sofas for those who preferred watching the dancers, and sundry glees were sung during the evening.

Mrs. McArthur took her baby again, as at Mrs. Mellor's ball, and I found the poor thing in the midst of a lot of shawls, at half-past two in the morning, where it nearly got turned over by the ladies searching for their shawls to go home. Mrs. McArthur is early initiating her poor little infant in habits of dissipation!

"Oh, Mr. ——, will you excuse me? I hear my baby crying."

"Oh, no! Mrs. McArthur, I really cannot excuse you, the dance is only just commenced."

"Oh, please let me go, I hear it crying!"

"Let it cry then, for I really cannot let you go till the quadrille is finished."

She is quite a young woman, and her partner was a rather young man.

Since my return to England I have been told that taking babies to balls has become quite common, and that, on one occasion, a lady lifted her baby, as she thought, from amongst a heap of shawls and cloaks, wrapped it up in haste, and carried it home, and next morning she discovered her little baby-girl metamorphosed into a little boy! but this may be an addition to the real story.

July 23rd.—Old Gudgeon came to me, wanting to know if I was satisfied with him, adding that he had worked like a horse. I cross-questioned him a little, when it appeared that Captain Stephenson had been trying to induce him to go to live with him up the country. I told him I had nothing to complain of since his last return, upon which he became so elated that he set off forthwith to Durban to get drunk, fell in with Captain Stephenson, who was in no better condition, and meeting Leyland in the town, the captain set Gudgeon on to trip him up, and then they began to abuse him.

Leyland only freed himself from the drunken men with his coat torn off his back, and escaped to Mr. Collins, whence he came home, and I hope we have seen the last of Captain Stephenson. If he presumes to make his appearance here again he will find the worst reception.

Leyland was very unwell this week, and had a great deal of troublesome and painful business to attend to in Durban; but he was on the sofa at home on Tuesday, quite ill, while I busied myself with household affairs, putting a quantity of things to air at the fire, and the mug with the bread mixed to rise beside it, when a lady and gentleman rode up to make a call. They proved to be the bride and bridegroom bringing their bridal cards, before they had been quite a week married. They excused themselves, saying their time was so short before sailing for India. I snatched the clothes from before the fire, and hurriedly placed them in our bedroom, and we had a very pleasant little visit, Captain Robertson agreeing that they would return and dine on Thursday, with Mr. and Mrs. Collins, when our party turned out most successfully, Mrs. Smith cooking our dinner, giving us delicious hotch-potch. Nothing could exceed the ducks or the large dish of green peas; the yams, too, were capital, and the pie and minced collops (both excellent) had not a chance. A sweet omelette was only too small, and the party, after coffee, rode home by moonlight, through our beautiful bush path, which is like a continued triumphal arch, with its bushes and creeping flowering shrubs of rich perfume. I rode in next morning to call on the bride and Mrs. Millar after her ball, and spent the day very pleasantly with Mrs. Collins, while Leyland looked after his business.

Next day again I was clearing out shelves and cupboards and putting all in order, when our neighbour, Mrs. Galliers, came to ask if I had any message for Mrs. Bowen, to whom she was going, so I said I would take advantange of her company, to go and see the dear old lady. She received me as usual with open arms, and told me she had had such a good dinner

on two days of last week, hoping I should go, and if she had known to-day she would have been better prepared. I found "Romaine on Faith"—our copy—lying on her sofa; she tells me she is so fond of the book that I must keep a good look-out for it. I trust it will be of real service and comfort to her soul, and calm and rectify those strong passions to which people tell me she is liable. It seems a severe chastening that she is subjected to now, in her seventy-sixth year, all alone here in the wilderness, without a relation or female near her. But no discipline is sent unnecessarily, doubtless these will all work for her eventual good. She writes me such interesting and spirited little notes, showing such a well-stored and varied mind, that I must introduce one of them now and then, to make her better known. We keep up a continual intercourse with pen and ink, exchanging books, and sending fruits and vegetables from our gardens as we think the other may not possess, and she relieves her mind of all her little domestic trials by writing them to me with great spirit and humour; here is one:—

"Shall we ever meet again? I hope so. What mountains of minor miseries rise up continually to prevent it!—but I have been accustomed to climb over mountains much more frequently than to canter over smoothly enamelled plains, so let that pass! This is a troublesome world and no mistake about it—and not a small portion of domestic difficulties and disturbances arise from servants, at least I have generally found it so. I have now only one! According to *Old Elwes* (perhaps you have read his life) I ought to say, 'So much the better!'—he used to observe to his friends that he kept only one man servant, who acted as groom to his *hunters*, butler, &c., &c., because, said he, 'If you had one, your work would be done! if two, half done! if three, you may do it yourself!' Well, I have but one, and *I* find I must work more than I like, and put up with more than I like, or perhaps I should have to fetch water myself. But this weather is making me feel young again: I have to-day set a basket of chalots with my

own hands, and put peas and beans into the ground by the hands of another, and chatted, and grumbled all the time to my own satisfaction, and that certainly is satisfactory. And now as I have gone through 'The Wide, Wide World,' it is right I should say something about it. I was very much pleased and interested, and agree with you that it appears more like real life than 'Queechy' exhibits; nevertheless, I still think I prefer the latter, as more delicately decorous—poor little Ellen meets with so much kissing and hugging, as really (to pity her seems uppermost in my thoughts) is awful! It may be American manners, but I think not English, at least I cannot remember such inflictions in *my* childhood, though I was pretty considerably made a pet of. I think there seems a fashion in these characteristic sketches of superlative young ladies! as Dickens' Nelly, Evangeline, Elfleada, and Ellen, and they mind me of an observation of my friend, Mrs. Sherwood, in regard to some stories we both had recently read, 'They all speak of such good little boys and girls as the world never saw.' I fear I shall tire you, else I had another comparison to make, but here ends this story with very much love. "MILESINA BOWEN."

Writing of "Queechy," she says, "I thank you for a peep into the 'Wide, Wide World.' Alas! I have peeped at it a weary while, and am not wide awake yet; in one sense I never wish to be, far pleasanter is it to me to look on the bright side of human nature, even if I suffer for it, as I often have done. I return you 'Queechy,' and almost regret parting with Elfie; it is a lovely, interesting story; the Evylin family caused a *Welsh fever* in my brain, for I have met with such characters long, long ago."

In another letter about this time, she says, "I was alone and reading yesterday most of the day. I did what I could, but I have not got *the* prayer. I read till mind and eyes would bear no more. My one servant brought my boiled fowl at twelve, because he wanted a holiday, so I FASTED, but not the right *fast*, for I got angry, and it was not till I *was* alone, that I felt *how*

good it is to be alone, with calm, peaceful, holy thoughts, my sole companions for a few hours."

Here is another extract from her notes :—

"My dear, kind friend, my heart thanks you, and so may my pen. More I cannot say. I did not expect Mrs. Galliers to-day, or I would have been ready—as I intended to TREAT you with a *critique* on 'Tom in England,' which I do *not like*, and think the writer acted wisely in withholding his name. As to poetical negresses!—oh dear!! far too high a flight for me to comprehend. But I had better not say too much on THAT head, as herewith I send you a few humble lines —thoughts on my bed last night, in my wakeful midnight hours, and put on paper this morning, with the vanity of imagining they may find favour in your eyes, my dear lady. I will say something of Uncle Tom some day."

The lines which accompanied this note were written on a small sheet of note-paper, stamped with a coloured forget-me-not. In a postscript she says,—

"If I live till the 27th of November I shall complete my seventy-sixth year, so please to make all reasonable allowances.

"Forget me not! forget me not!
Though summer friends are smiling—
Though various cares should be thy lot,
Or pleasure's snares beguiling.
I will not deem our hearts estranged
Because so rare our meetings,
While welcome words of love unchanged
Foreshadow future greetings.
There needs not always *years* to bind
Sweet ties,—to friendship dearest
A glance reveals the kindred mind,
To hope's strong vision, clearest.
Emblem of life! dear lady, view
The rising and the setting sun!
Oh! may bright beams still rest on you!
Yet, when *my* weary race is run,
Forget me not! forget me not!

"MILESINA BOWEN, August, 1853."

The foregoing lines were caused by my having been rather long away from my dear old friend, with whom I

feel it quite a privilege to talk; but when I walk over to her house it takes up the time of two people. Leyland will not let me go alone lest a tiger should eat me up, and then who would there be to tell the tale? and tigers do not give notice or say "Mind the next time I meet you." However, I did meet with one once, at least one passed close by me and never spoke to me, and I was so busy sketching a tree full of birds' nests hanging from the branches, that I only saw the beast walking away quietly in the long reeds, with, I think, its tail between its legs, from which I supposed I had frightened it more than it had me. Probably I was the first dressed lady it had ever seen, and it did not know what to make of me. Leyland had gone round the lake; but soon made his appearance to look after me, for he, too, had caught sight of the tiger, and did not know what might have happened to me.

My journal here seems to have had a little rest, so I cannot do better than fill the gap with an extract from one of my own letters, giving some account of the Zulu missions, as I received it from Mr. Fynn, who has lived many years among them. He says the amount of good the missionaries do is very doubtful, that some of them allow they can scarcely count on a real convert, for with occasion the converts will return to their old ways of living. The missionaries come out with the best intentions to labour in the vineyard, but by-and-by they meet with so much disappointment, that they gradually subside into common traders, like others, farming or making money for themselves. At the same time they are a well-to-do people, and they educate two or three girls in their own house, who become to themselves very good servants. Mr. Shaw, the head of the Wesleyan missions, has 10,000*l.* a year under his entire control, for the purposes of the missions and maintenance of the missionaries.

Of course, men and their families devote themselves to the work, they do it in many instances as a livelihood, and they live better than most of the settlers.

Most people in a wild country like travelling with wagon and oxen. The other day a spring-van and a

pair of horses were seen cantering nicely along the road, creating great admiration and surprise; it belonged to a Mr. Grout, of the American Mission. Of course "the labourer is worthy of his hire;" but the sympathy the missionaries get at home for entire disinterestedness is more than is always their due. They have trials and hardships—who has not?

The Zulu, who is a keenly avaricious, parsimonious man, will argue with his master thus: "What good will it do me to become a Christian? I may then have only one wife. Now, I can work and buy one wife, then I work and buy another, who works for me. When I have three wives I am a captain, and do no work at all, so I am better off as I am."

The gentleman who gave me these particulars said that his wife had come out full of sympathies for the Caffres and missions, and that when, after a while, she wrote home depreciating the value of the work, as inadequate for the purpose, her friends thought she had soon become very careless of religious duties.

This gentleman thinks the Caffres of Natal,—who are a fine race of wild men, strong in their bodies, in their prejudices, and in their passions,—are true descendants of Ishmael, who were to live in the presence of their brethren, but of whom nothing is said of their being brought into the fold. There are many Jewish casts of countenance and feature among the Caffres, and the Jewish love of money is a strong feature amongst them. They never spend if they can possibly avoid doing so; they will receive money to go on a journey from a white man, and, if they cannot beg, they will all but starve rather than part with it. They are fond of good things if provided for them, but will neither purchase for themselves, nor be at the trouble to dress otherwise than in the most savage and easy way, and always return to their mealies. The Ishmaelites may have Abraham's features, as they have him for their father. What are the prophecies regarding the African races? Ham's descendants spread over Africa, but these Caffres are neither negroes nor Hottentots.

The language, by the-bye, is very difficult to learn,

there are so many prefixes, which alter the original meaning of the word, and the sounds of some letters are called "clicks." I saw a grammar made by some of the missionaries, but could not understand it. The Governor has just now ordered the printing of a dictionary, and I believe also a grammar, which are said to be more correct and more intelligible.

It is next to an impossibility for an English person, not speaking their language *fluently,* to teach them about the soul and salvation. You have to give them new ideas, as well as principles, and you may convey quite a false meaning to their understanding. Neither is it a very safe way to let English children learn by intercourse with the Caffre; they learn so much evil. I often wish to do good to my present Caffre, who is a nice, intelligent, quiet lad, but if I try to speak to him he stands stupid and half sullen, and understands nothing but what I show him by movements.

Ah! how the Caffres would excite your compassion, while you laughed at their oddities—poor heathen things! Not heathens either, for I do not think they worship even a stock or a stone, nor do I find it well authenticated that they worship snakes, though some venerate them and are very much afraid of them.

Ebenezer has just put his hand on two little green birds like green canaries; I put them in a cage, but they pushed through the bars immediately, and now find my bedroom a narrow prison. We have been watching the graceful flight of some hundreds of them, off and on a large tree, and we wish to examine these two to find out what they are—they are very wild. We let these two go; but some days later we made a capital pudding of a few of the same kind.

We watched a beautiful humming-bird one day sipping the sweets of the rich scarlet Caffre-boom, a tree whose flowers and leaves come at different seasons, so that it would appear a scarlet mass without a leaf were it not surrounded by other trees that lend their foliage to clothe the scarlet.

CHAPTER IX.

September 1st, 1853.—Yesterday proved a day of misfortunes. To begin with, Gudgeon, who has latterly taken it into his head to provide for himself (which he is quite incapable of doing), had got his week's wages. He set out to make purchases, and not having returned, is doubtless gloriously or dead drunk somewhere, or shut in the lock-up. The consequence is the horses got nothing to eat all day, the fowls he left shut up, rabbits and every creature left to the mercy of providence and Caffres; and I, in attending to the fowls, have got covered with a tiny insect the twentieth-part size of a flea, and called "lice."

Leyland returned late at night with a list of grievances. He could not see the people he wanted, so rode home by the farm of one, which took him across country. Seeing some fine mushrooms he dismounted and gathered them into his handkerchief, but in trying to remount my pony, it reared, and knocked him down. He rose, caught the animal, and again tried to mount, but the brute got up on its hind legs, struck out with its fore legs, hit Leyland in two places, and again throwing him down, broke its bridle and made off. Leyland was not much hurt; he chased the pony for a length of time without success, and walked home. On coming near the river he heard an ox in distress, and knowing he could not assist it alone, he went on to our farm and took Davenport and the Caffres back; but before they found the ox darkness came on, and they had to leave it to its fate. The Caffre in charge had neglected the oxen, and a dozen were missing from the craal.

At two o'clock to-day my pony made its appearance with two Caffres, who found it some miles distant. The bridle is gone, and one stirrup was brought loose, the other nowhere; the saddle-cloth all but worked from under the dismantled saddle, so the pony must have been rolling itself among the bushes. Our Caffres are all out searching for the stirrup and oxen, and we must dine as we can to-day, for there is not a Caffre to tend a fire.

Leyland has gone into Durban with a heavy heart to-day. A case is being tried of his and is to be decided, and Leyland is sure it will be against him, however much justice may be his.

We have had many troubles which I have not liked to write down in my journal, to make it painful to read; but even troubles are good for those who love Christ, all working together for good, though it is difficult to feel them so while upon us.

I had a young girl to help me at this time, daughter of the man Leyland had engaged to take care of the farm. I had everything to teach her, and, though quick and apt, she was so thoroughly careless and idle that Leyland sent her home in disgrace one day with a message never to show herself again. I fear she told me a direct lie, and that at fifteen and a half years is an almost hopeless error.

We were sorry to part with the Smiths, who have left; but Smith gets half as much more salary, and his boys go to school and attend the Sunday-school also. I have made Ebenezer a very good servant, but he begins to complain of our late dinners (we have not a servant at work after 8 p.m.), and as his term of engagement is nearly up, I fear he will want, like the rest, to go home for a few months. Ebenezer, with occasional help from Mrs. Smith, served us three months, and though our dinners were not quite in English fashion from under silver covers, we had some very good ones, and not ill turned out; frequently a gentleman or two partaking with us. Yesterday (September 12) we had a haunch of venison for our two selves, of Gudgeon's shooting,

for he is back, poor penitent, and "can't tell what took him so." We had Windsor beans, yam, and soup, but no pudding. We made Amatingoola preserve, a substitute for red currant jelly, to eat with the venison.

I have been preserving lemon syrup, of which I can only do a little at a time on our parlour grate. My pan has unfortunately a moving handle (for convenience of travel), and Leyland, finding me busy one evening, took my place to help, but not understanding the handle, the pan upset, and half the syrup was landed on the floor. Our "helps" were all off to their homes or beds, so there was nothing for it but down on my knees and wash it up myself. Leyland did not like to witness the *finale;* he carried out the sugary mat, and took himself off to bed, whither I soon followed. The papaw fruit makes a beautiful preserve, though scarcely equal in flavour to English fruit.

Mrs. Bowen has sent me some lovely roses, and to show what will grow in this climate I will name the flowers of a bouquet I had yesterday, consisting of lupins, blue and yellow, larkspur, sweet-william, double and single stock, all healthy; also a very beautiful Norfolk Island willow, bearing a yellow button-flower like an acacia.

Of fruits, scarcely any will not grow if planted and cared for, but there seem to be few native fruits fit to eat. We grow orange, lemon, lime, mulberry, quince, grapes, pines, peaches, nectarines, and granadillas.

Mrs. Fry says that some people are tried with poverty and some with riches. How few if they had the choice would not prefer being tried with wealth; but I am not sure of it being the easiest, though the most luxurious, nor do I think it is always the happiest. I often think of my mother's recommendation to us as girls to go and shake up the mattresses for our health's sake, and the small success her advice met with where there were plenty of servants; but I find my active life in Natal by no means unpleasant, nor do I feel degraded by performing many a little menial office. I should soon grow insipid and *ennuyée*, if I had to make my

daily occupations. As it is, I never need seek employment, it is ready for my hand each moment of the day.

It is evening (September 15th); Leyland is writing opposite to me; the tea-things are on the table and the kettle on the hearth. We are to have cocoa, shrimps sent by a friend, and a famous loaf of my making. Fish is not commonly sold; Caffres seem never to eat it, and only one man hitherto has made a trade of it. Mullet are abundant, and there are good oysters of irregular shapes. A gentleman caught a fine Cape salmon in the bay, five feet long.

September 23rd.—What would my English friends have thought could they have seen me during the last half-hour squatted on the hearth with the bellows in hand, most industriously coaxing a very obstinate wood fire, which after four days of perpetual rain is very unwilling to light? It was a good lesson for patience, and has been conquered at last—not for warmth, but for household purposes, first to boil some muslins, while I have clear rain-water in which to wash them, and secondly for dinner, which otherwise we might chance to go without. The house Caffre has been sent into Durban, and will take his time. Rain continued from Monday afternoon till Friday; we both took cold, but were tolerably comfortable with a fire, cooking and reading by turns, and have fared very well. If we had a good kitchen and apparatus we could manage nicely, but in wet weather the fire is lighted on the floor of the iron house, the smoke from which is intolerable to any but a Caffre, and he has found himself very snug and warm sitting in the midst of it doing nothing.

Some of the notes I received from my dear aged friend and neighbour (Mrs. Bowen) give so vivid a picture of the minor trials which make up the sum of human life in Natal at this early period of its English history, that I must quote from them occasionally, and introduce more perfectly my very interesting and clever friend of seventy-six years of age, whose solitary life here in the wilderness is so singular, and to all outward

appearance so sad, without a connection to cheer her last years.

I wish I could convey to my readers a more vivid picture of my dearly valued and loved old friend. Imagine a small, slender, antiquated, stooping figure, a quick and piercing eye, a mouth without a tooth in it, and nose and chin forming what are familiarly termed nut-crackers; but, withal, such a look of mind and graceful dignity, combined with gentle but determined resolution, that even strong men were afraid of her. Here is a spirited note of hers :—

"That man Galliers was here on Friday, and promised to make a new gate for my bijou garden, and fix it up on Saturday afternoon; he was consequential enough about it, said he had plenty of work in the bay, &c. I reminded him of when he sought employment for himself and wife in a very different spirit, which appeared to make some impression. He made many professions, but there they end, and my poor gate is nearly ended too ; I quite expect each time I open it to be knocked on the head ! Troubles thicken and seldom come single. On Friday morning my Illovo Yahoo left me, and I received so very unfavourable a character of one who offered on Thursday that I could not venture to take him. At present I have not heard of another. A person came on Sunday morning to tell my gardener his wife was dangerously ill and he must go home ; she has lately been confined of her sixth child—the eldest, only ten, is a girl, and some help to her mother—the second, a boy of nine, was luckily here with his father, so he stayed to help me while his father was away. He returned about six o'clock, sooner than he has ever done before; but he thought a good deal of his little son, a trifle more or less for the pack ox, and, maybe, a minimum for the mistress and favours received. I am glad to find his wife has excellent neighbours ; they have not sent to-day, and he wants to go and see her again to-morrow. Fire and water wanted,—wind and rain too much of! Oh! the minor miseries of human life do, I think, engross them all! Oh, no! I wish at least that you, my dear

friend, and a few others whom I love dearly, were exempt from them—a forlorn hope; let me hear from you soon, and fail not to give me some good news.

"Very kindly and truly yours,

"M. BOWEN."

Here is another letter written about this time :—

"Oh, how do you bear this dismal weather—with, like myself, innumerable discomforts to boot? I cannot write cheerfully, yet I must needs write somewhat, for I have no other companions than my pen, my books, and my own oft-times weary and mostly troubled thoughts! Alas! my gourd is withered, my idol is defaced, thrown down, almost destroyed, and '*dost thou well to be angry?*' No, no! I am humbled and sorrowful, but while I feel the rod, I know who hath appointed it, and at least endeavour to submit with patient resignation; but I will explain a little, for doubtless it is requisite to a due understanding of this tale of lamentation, weeping, and woe! Well then, to begin; some time ago Captain Garden called here and asked to bring a friend of his, who is botanizing in Natal, to see my exotics, and so it was to be. But they chose yesterday for their visit; everything wore a gloomy, cheerless aspect, I was really unwell. After having struggled with the wind in the morning,—had my light meal called dinner,—I was weeding to warm myself, when two gentlemen rode up and said 'good morning' (it was past 4 p.m.!). Will the sun go back on the dial of Ahaz, because that proud creature, man, has not dined? I know fashion has long sanctioned the silly custom, but it is not the less absurd and preposterous; I generally answer 'good day,' for that is correct, but one often thoughtlessly follows a multitude to do foolishly. But to my story: I could not refuse to take them round about to see what could be seen, and truly it proved a source of mortification to me, and of evident disappointment to the stranger. Captain Garden was astonished at the scene of desolation which presented itself: fences good-for-nothing, gate nearly done for; but the dear Poincianæ Pulcherina grieved me

sadly, the few leaves still remaining looked like dried parsley; there were no leaves on the papaws,—cocoa-nuts departed,—the row of bananas on the long walk, which so lately as on Sunday were all alive and likely, resembled dahlias in England after a sharp, frosty night! In short, a look of chilling and rather contemptuous wonder was my reward for all my exertions, veiled, indeed, with quiet politeness, for Mr. A—— is certainly a well-bred gentleman, and for this very reason I regretted he should find his visit so inopportune. I could only tell him I shall be glad to see him another time; but when can all this mischief be repaired? In some respects never! In the evening Mrs. B—— and her son rode up. I reminded her of the promised papaw receipt, she said it was all guess-work with her; but I have no doubt you and I can manage without it. I am only half-way through the second volume of Lord Woodhouselee's excellently written 'Universal History,' but I shall inflict a long dissertation thereon, or rather on my reminiscences, in another scribbling fit, so I hope you will be prepared with a sufficient stock of patience to endure it! I have scarcely left room to tell you with how much love I am,

"Yours very affectionately,
"M. BOWEN."

But her letters would fill a volume of themselves, and are full of spirit, character, information, and interest. Her criticisms upon eminent characters in the last century or beginning of this were sometimes both cutting and merited.

October 4th, 1853.—I have lent my only servant, and he a Caffre, to help Gudgeon to-day, who was in despair at not having a single Caffre for out-door work. It is the time when the ripened mealies tempt all the Caffres to idleness, and they set off to their craals for two or three months to live at ease and do nothing. The farmer has only two Caffres just now; one of them is a little boy who attends to the cattle at pasture. Yesterday he came running to us in a fright, having

seen a large tiger feasting on a dead cow, which unfortunately was not poisoned. The tiger had paid a visit to our hen-house in the night and killed three beautiful hens, but being disturbed left them for our dinner. He may have taken one off in his mouth. A jackal stole some of our white Chinese fowls a few nights ago from close beside our dwelling-house. The night was stormy, so my husband did not hear the disturbance, and the jackal got clear off with his booty; but we shall be on the watch to give him a shot if he returns. It takes but a moment to jump out of bed and seize the gun, which lies ready loaded, and our room opens into the garden.

I am becoming a very fair cook, all things considered. I can bake, roast, boil, broil, fry, make capital soups, prepare the vegetables, and boil rice, &c., but I cannot make a really first-rate rice pudding. I have lately learned to churn. Leyland is my instructor, and we have enjoyed delicious butter, with our own made bread. We churn in a wide-necked bottle, taking turns of shaking it well, both in fun and earnest as our red faces testify.

We have a beautiful plantation of papaw-fruit trees, raised from seeds out of the fruit Mrs. Bowen gave us last year. One tree is a good deal higher than I am, and next year it will bear. We have besides some fine trees full of fruit, which grows clustering round the main stem under the leaves, some of it nearly as large as my head, but we have to watch the fruit as it ripens, or the birds will be before us in eating the inside out. The pines, which were mere shoots last year, are already beginning to fruit; pines take two years to come to perfection. We sent the Caffre into Durban with half-a-dozen fine pines for sale, slung on a stick over his shoulder. A friend seeing him go along thus laden, told us it made him think of the pictures of the great bunch of grapes which Caleb and the other spies brought from the valley of Eshcol to prove to Moses how good a land it was. Our Caffre sold all our pines quickly enough, but for sixpence each, instead of one and sixpence!

Beautiful as this country is, I—like many others—

begin to think a curse is over it. Trouble and disappointment come to every planter's labour, in whatever way he tries to cultivate the ground. The Governor, too, talks of taxing us still more, which the Durbanites mean to resist, as they are not satisfied with the manner in which the present taxes are being applied. They think a too expensive system is carried over a very small and poor population unable to bear it, and that very little is done for the colony, the chief part being expended on salaries and placemen.

The withdrawal of the Queen from "the sovereignty" is regarded as unwise, as likely to endanger the peace and safety of Natal, by inducing hostilities so much nearer us. Our quiet Caffres have strong, active bodies when they choose to use them, and they are increasing too fast among us—flying to our milder government. They may rise when they become strong, and become chiefs in turn. But this is the dark side of the picture; while Natal is steadily progressing, lands are being cultivated, and farmers are more hopeful. The first to venture are always the losers

The sovereignty was thriving, but the Boers are stern masters, and there will be a hard struggle between them and the Caffres, whom (if they subdue) they will perhaps enslave, and. when England's check is taken off, another Mrs. Beecher Stowe will be required to rouse men's consciences. I have been told that Natal has never cost England a sixpence, and that, poor as it is, it has supported itself. Surely, therefore, it is a creditable little colony, and should be protected.

I have been feeding three little chickens which are under my especial patronage. One is a poor little timid orphan without a relation except a wicked aunt, and a still more spiteful grandmother, who peck and persecute the poor thing so that I have to watch and feed it by stealth. None of the others take it up, and it lives alone in the world. Gudgeon takes it to sleep with him, and Ebenezer and I give it crumbs. Its mother and father fell a prey to the tiger or jackal; its sisters and brothers made dainty meals for the hawk,

such as escaped the flood a few weeks ago when many perished by inclement weather. We had tremendous rains during ten days. While some plantings rejoiced in them, young seeds were washed out, and some valuable China grass sprouts entirely disappeared. Another storm is brewing; I hope my husband will reach home before it breaks out, for when rain does visit this very fine, dry climate there is no mistake about it. A brilliant comet is visible. The winter has been cold for this country; spring is like equinoctial gales. We have enjoyed wood-fire continually in the mornings and evenings, keeping it in with the utmost patience and perseverance owing to the damp state of the wood. But here comes my husband, and with him the rain. I have secured five fine large papaws, which will be an agreeable addition to our bread and butter. Leyland has poisoned a dead cow, and this morning a hyena—about as large as a donkey—was found lying dead beside its dainty morsel. He has been watching, too, in hopes of shooting the depredating tiger himself, while I have bravely slept in the house quite alone, with one door unlocked to enable him to enter if he should return before I am up.

A gentleman, who is planting sugar largely further up the country, rode out to see our progress, and was greatly struck with the beauty of our situation, and indeed it is a lovely spot with its glorious sunrise and sunset, the view stretching over a great extent of country, with the bay and the Indian Ocean in front. But it is sadly disheartening too, for all our labour gets destroyed by wild animals in one shape or other. In the next generation, perhaps, these difficulties will be overcome, but pioneers like ourselves are the sufferers. Still we live very comfortably, often luxuriously (though not according to European ideas), in spite of all these troubles.

Yesterday my fear came true—Ebenezer wants to go to his craal. After much talking to, he reluctantly consented to stay three days, because I have no one to supply his place. We have made him quite the best servant we have had in the colony; he has a good, clear

head, is very quiet, does his work nicely, and is strictly faithful and honest. I quite like Ebenezer, and am sure he will not be so well off in his craal; but "the dog returns to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire," and I suppose nature, with love of home, is strongly implanted in the Caffre, and he will ever prefer his wilderness, with his ease and filth, to domestic cultivated habits. We had even made him become tolerably active. Who shall we get next? A nice Christian Caffre girl brought a note to-day; I asked if she knew any one who wants to work, but she says, "No." She was a great friend of "Louisa" while she was with us; she tells me she "not know where she is." "Is she married?" "Very likely," was the reply. Another Caffre trait—they were sworn friends while near each other.

CHAPTER X.

MY husband told Mr. —— yesterday, who was lamenting that his wife would do nothing and was never contented, that I did everything. I must have spent an hour to-day trying *to do* a wild flower for Mrs. Bowen—it is a very delicate and lovely sort of lily—a blue lilac in small stars, with white stars in the centre of each flower. I have given the character, but not the beauty or delicacy of the flower, yet it has cost me two or three hours' work.

October 14th.—We have been packing a box of eggs to-day for the steamer—twenty-eight dozen—and we have plenty for our own use, so our hens do well. The tiger has been supping off our fowls for some time, which has obliged us to bring them from the farm nearer to the house; the consequence is, Mr. Tiger, disappointed of his dainty bit, has disturbed Mrs. Galliers, poor woman, who lives up the other hill. She ran here this morning in a fright, saying she dare not sleep alone, and must send for her husband; she fears its breaking into her house! Many of the cottages are very frail things, made of reeds and mud; but I never heard of an animal breaking into them. This tiger must be watched for and shot.

I have no servant at all for the house, just now. Ebenezer, my "stone of help" so long, has gone to his craal, saying he does not mean to work again. Old Gudgeon is much more fussy, and he is so useful in the garden when he has finished with his animals, that I grudge taking up his time about the house.

We are none of us very well at present, everybody is complaining. Charming as this climate frequently is,

I begin to think the English atmosphere suits English people best. The Caffres are a strong, firmly knit, sturdy race, in their tight, shining, brown leather skins. The English suffer from a variety of causes; I had some curious affection of my head three nights ago, that frightened my husband so, that he ran off to bring our neighbour, Mrs. Galliers, and the first thing I recognized was one on each side of my bed, and the blood rushing round in my head. The doctor has been to see me, and reminded me how I told him after my serious illness last year, that I must stay with my husband if it should shorten my life ten years; but, though a relaxing climate, I cannot think it unhealthy. It is all that men have to go through that brings them down, and that, as the colony advances, will be less difficult. As I have said before, it is the pioneers in a young colony who suffer.

Our watches and clocks have all stopped and the sun has never shown himself to day, so we must guess the hour. We have had the most severe winter on record—so say the wise ones—storms of every description, with damp and cold. Further inland there have been snow and frost. Our beautiful pine-apple plants are nipped by the cold; the leaves have all fallen from the bananas and papaws. Twenty-five of these last fruits have just been brought in, averaging the size of my head nearly; the birds eat them very much; they are a pleasant, wholesome fruit, but not piquant. The bananas are a delicious fruit, and the birds cannot so easily get at them, owing to their tough skin. Some kind of large rat has been busy with our sugar-canes lately; but we had a very heavy crop of oat hay, which is already rising again fast.

Poor drunken Gudgeon has been making himself most useful during our total blank of servants, but I dread sending him with a message into Durban, and there is no one else to send. How long this scarcity will last I cannot tell. I have swept the rooms myself for two days. I don't mind the work itself, for one must do something; but a tidy, trustworthy woman in the kitchen department would be a great comfort.

15*th*.—We have got a new Caffre, who has perfumed the house with his aroma though he did not come further than the entrance. Ebenezer was quite sweet. We can hardly let this one enter the house. Really, we are at a bad pass, and the loss of the Smiths from the farm is great; but it is to be their gain, and all works round for good in the end.

Everything looks gloomy just now; there is nothing cheerful about me but our two kittens; the clouds are weeping, the landscape obscured. Short of servants, I am saving the fire on account of cutting wood for it. Gudgeon, weeding the pine beds, looks weak and ill to-day, and everything has a chill and dismal aspect. The people are displeased with the English Government for breaking faith and abandoning the sovereignty, when farming up the country was beginning to promise well, and people all were "looking up." The Dutch farms were doing well, and now no one knows what effect this move will have on Natal, and they feel they are working in the dark.

We have had a very pleasant visitor for a few days in Mr. George Eastwood, so one day my husband and I left him in charge of the house, and took a stroll, intending to make a sketch of the hill from a little distance with our various small buildings on it. It was the anniversary of our wedding day, so we resolved to have a holiday. We returned home laden with wild flowers of great beauty, and found our friend decorating the room with flowers from the garden. Neither had he neglected the kitchen: we had a piece of pork, a pie, some good soup, yams, and a dessert that would not have disgraced an English table—a splendid bunch of bananas, with a fine papaw top and bottom. Two gentlemen rode out from Durban to share the good things, and after dinner we tried the fashionable amusement of table-turning, making both a hat and a small square table go round, without any guile on our part that I could discover. To my surprise I found the gentlemen intended remaining all night, being so far on their way to another farm. However, I gave myself no trouble; there were two beds

ready, and the third gentleman lay on the floor wrapped in a *kaross*. They left before we were up in the morning, and we were not late.

October 19th.—We were eating a very fine papaw to-day, when it occurred to us to preserve its fellow; so, while my husband undertook to keep up the wood fire, I weighed fruit and sugar, and following my receipt which specified "no water," I ignorantly put the sugar in the pan to melt before the fruit was added, and in two minutes barley sugar began to form. Alas, for the mess it made! Emptying the pan as quickly as possible, separating the candy from the sugar, I placed a little water in the bottom of the pan, and boiled the half and half into a liquid, taking out the candy as it loosened. Then cleaning the pan out, we put in fruit and sugar with the sugar water, when a beautiful preserve began to form; but it required patience and much skimming and stooping over the fire. Not wishing to lose the candied sugar, I said I would make it into toffy. So, fearing my husband's raillery, I popped it into the pan with a lump of butter, when he came to the rescue, and made the toffy himself! We had a good deal of fun over it, but no light work with all the sticky dishes to clean. It was now or never with the pans and spoons while we had a fire and hot water, so I cleaned away at them like any servant, and by the time they were all clean, it was high time for my bread to go into the bakepan. Gudgeon, however, did that part, and he made ready our dinner from the leavings of yesterday; while I washed my hands, brushed my hair, and wrote up in my journal. From the look of the sky it must be near six o'clock, so I have had nearly twelve hours' work! And now dinner is over, and we may settle to finish reading our letters, and tea, and then to bed and sound sleep.

October 20th.—The first thing after breakfast to-day my husband told me he had a long ride in prospect for me, as soon as the washing-up was done. It proved indeed both a long and beautiful ride, and a very agreeable day. We went first across country over a rough, steep track,

at places almost grown over, but very beautiful—the hills undulating, and patched with bush and grass, covered with wild flowers scenting the air deliciously.

One splendid Natal lily was in full flower, looking like the queen of flowers in the wilderness; or, at a sufficient distance, like a white lamb lying on the grass. The handsome orange-coloured shrub (*Virtoola, capensis*) was in full flower. We crossed a good many brooks, rivers, or ditches. Three of the streams were so deep that I had to hold my feet up above the stirrup, the pony being above the middle in water. Sometimes the way was so steep it was like the ascent of a mountain on horseback for short distances, and one step after a stream was so deep, that Leyland called out, "Well done! I expected you to come off." At another little ditch, where the ground was clay, Leyland's horse, just in front of mine, slipped. Whether or not mine saw I cannot tell, but to my surprise it made a spring and carried me over the slippery ground. I called out, "Well done, pony!" but my husband clapped me on the back, and said, "Well done, you!" If I had ever been a good or famous rider, I should not brag of these feats. We are always most vain of those accomplishments in which we least excel. Why? Because they are the most difficult to us, and give us the most trouble to attain even mediocrity therein. What we effect with ease seems less to us.

The object of our ride was to visit a farm, where we found a nice, well-ordered family of seven children: the eldest is nearly twelve years—she superintends the kitchen. The second is baby's nurse; the third, a little thing about five years old, takes care of her little brother aged two or three years—she washes his face and hands for dinner, and attends to him generally. The two eldest boys, about eight and nine years old, are dark, swarthy, sunburnt young lads. We dined with them, and as I have mentioned the cook, aged twelve years, I may as well tell of the good dinner she gave us, which consisted of roasted fowls and potatoes, after which boiled rice and jam, with milk; after partaking

of which, we started on our long ride home, going by the road, instead of returning as we came by the "veldt." We had a lovely ride through bushy sand lanes, with wild flowers on each side, and a fine view, from the heights, of Durban, its bay, the Bluff, and the islands. We got home about five o'clock, and Gudgeon had a tough old cock ready for us, of which we gave him the larger share.

Our English papers induced us to sit up rather late reading. The cart also had returned from the Point laden with our famous box of hams, bacon, cheeses, and preserved salmon, sent by kind friends from England. We instantly began to unpack our treasures, more especially as rain threatened, and the box was too heavy to bring in packed. Famous hams they are, in beautiful order, that will afford us many a rich feast and nice variety from the tough beef of the colony.

The rain did come down, but not heavily; the previous night we had an awful thunderstorm, the rapid fork-lightning came flash after flash without intermission, while the thunder shook the house as it rolled and roared. There is a great deal of lightning here, which is doubtless useful in destroying myriads of insects which swarm and devour all around.

Old Gudgeon called me yesterday to look at a flight of swallows hither and thither over one spot, but they did not alight on the ground. Gudgeon said they were eating the winged ants, in proof of which he took me to a spot under the swallows where was a nest open, i.e. little chinks like walls were being built by a quantity of white ants, and out of these chinks were issuing large black ants with four long gossamer wings. Gudgeon's natural history tells me these ants were just matured and winged, and that, as they rose in the air, the swallows caught them. He learned this in India. It seemed to be the case, for as the winged ants ceased to issue from the fissures of earth, the swallows very quickly dispersed, and we saw no more of them. The swallows had evidently a purpose, and the scene was like a fight with an

invisible enemy, for I could not see the ants so far up in the air.

A lovely morn g rose after the storm. My husband set out for Durban ; Gudgeon made himself smart to carry a buck to Mr Durham, and if he did not keep his promise to be back quickly to do the work of the kitchen, I should be left entirely alone, as I thought, for the day, and might have the fire to keep up and dinner to cook myself. Presently, however, back came Leyland, accompanied by our old farm-servant Smith, on some business, so instead of a quiet day it proved a very busy one indeed, though I got help from the unexpected guests. First there was luncheon to provide and serve, and then we set vigorously to work to preserve our mulberries on our little parlour grate, and six quarts of jam we made amongst us; Gudgeon never coming back at all. We went to bed very tired and not in the best of humours, and when I rose in the morning there was still no sign of any one about. No Gudgeon appeared. We lit our parlour fire, boiled our kettle, and made our own breakfast, Leyland doing most of the work, for I have caught cold and do not feel very well. The day is wet and dismal, and I ache all over. Our neighbour, old Mrs. Bowen, is almost as badly off. The lazy Caffres ought to be made to work, as one of the conditions of giving them refuge in the country. They fly to the protection of the English Government; but they are free, and do not care to work. Dear old Mrs. Bowen is not sure if she will have a servant at all to-morrow, which is hard at nearly eighty years of age ; but her spirit rises with her increased troubles, and she writes me word she feels rather elastic than depressed, adding that these things cannot go beyond the permission granted by "Our Father." Our neighbour, Mrs. Galliers, has offered to help both of us, which, with her own cottage and two children, will be more than she can manage. As to our troublesome, half-witted Gudgeon, he has made up a bundle of his clothes and marched off without one word to us, telling them as he passed the farm that he was going to Maritzberg!—I

conclude to Captain Stephenson's again ; he ran off from him once, and the captain horse-whipped him the next time he met him, but Gudgeon bears no malice.

We remained in this uncomfortable state without a servant for several days. The Caffres had all gone off to eat mealies at their craals ; the "Diggings" have taken away many of the white servants to Australia and most of those who remain have a small patch of land of their own, and, as Captain Garden said the other day, "when they get twenty acres of land, they fancy themselves great independent people, quite too high to go out to work, though they may be living off mealies at home." But though we are better served without them, we feel it rather too long a picnic, and if our manner of life sounded like gipsying while we were comparatively civilized, I wonder what it would be considered now!

By-the-bye, the heat is at times so great in the sun that I rarely wear gloves in the garden, and having always had an aversion to sweep the streets with my clothes, I lift my dress here more than ever, hiding my hands under its folds. The blue spectacles are charming for softening the light, but I cannot pop them on every time I run out to the kitchen. For airing the linen in the sun they are invaluable, and this occupation, which must come occasionally, is about the most trying and fatiguing work that falls to my lot, though it sounds but a little one. I still think I prefer this active life to sitting at rug-work or making morning calls. But you know when the frogs wanted a king, they got one that ate them all up. There is great satisfaction in feeling useful to some one, and that I have. I learn many a practical lesson, too, in cooking ; I used to feel I was in the hands of my servants, but hereafter I shall be better able to direct them, so good springs out where it seems all evil.

I have got some beautiful flowers for your work, so I hope you will send me rich-coloured wools of their kinds—a primrose colour amongst them, some of that rich new China-blue cobalt, gamboge, to shade into

scarlet or vermilion, pink-lilacs and blue-lilacs; you cannot send them too brilliant to match the flowers of Natal. There is no great variety in the colours of the foliage; I may here name some of the wonderful varieties of flowers that grow wild in this country. First the scarlet Caffre boom-tree (the *Virtoola capensis*), a shrub; a white dog-rose, a creeper; poligula; lobelia; daimella; gloriosa superba; ipomœa; agapanthus; scilla; bulthemia-oranticum; gardenia, a shrub; with a white bell-flower, deliciously perfumed; the hemanthus or Natal poppy; a white clematis, a delicate and lovely creeper, besides very many others whose names I do not know. Besides the native flowers, any that are planted from other countries seem to thrive. A curious and handsome kind of orchis, of a pale green, has been blooming in a glass of water for the last fortnight.

October 24th, 1853.—Not a Caffre even at the farm. Yesterday, as we were reading the Church Service, in walked Gudgeon and sat down very quietly behind the door, kneeling when we knelt. We thought he was penitent and had returned to his work, and so he surely did intend, or, as he expressed to Mrs. Galliers, "to make terms with master;" but perhaps the chapters for the day, which twice reproved drunkenness, offended him; he may have thought we chose them on purpose, for so soon as prayers were ended he walked off again, and we have to feed fowls, rabbits, and horses ourselves, with a little help from worthy Mrs. Galliers, who goes between our house, her own, and poor Mrs. Bowen's (now wholly without a servant) as she can make time, while her own husband is at work in the bay, and her little good boy of four years takes charge of his little sister of nearly two years old. As to Mrs. Bowen, she will have to boil her own kettle if she would have a warm breakfast to-morrow, but a neighbour kindly sends her Caffre to light her fire.

I rose at six, and commenced giving the room a thorough sweeping, while Leyland went to the outdoor work. I was in the midst of dust, in dressing-gown and

curl-papers peeping from under my night-cap, when Mrs. Galliers came running in to help ; but, before she could say why, Leyland called me, and in sheer mischief was dragging in Mr. Proudfoot to look at me at my occupation. I have said, in sheer mischief, but I believe in my heart, it was affection made him do it,—pride in his wife, who was not above her duty, nor sinking under it in discontent. To do Mr. Proudfoot justice, I must say he seemed as unwilling to come forward and *catch* me as I should have been to have gone forward, had I known why Leyland whistled for me in such a hurry. As it was, we laughed and blushed it off. The gentlemen went to the rabbits, while I dressed, and Mrs. Galliers made breakfast ready. When they came in again I was mixing scones, and I found they had been frying eggs and bacon, and yams, and we made a capital breakfast. The sun rose in a heat mist, like a dense fog in the distance, and the day has been the first of real summer ; but the evening has closed threatening rain unless the high wind just risen blows it off. The winged ants were out of their holes in quantities, but no swallows to-day. We have been as quiet as possible, and have read and worked and drawn, and visited our live stock, walking over to the farm which looked very desolate without the family of Smiths.

October 25th.—Dr. Cunninghame rode out this forenoon, bringing two gentlemen with him. They made a pleasant chatty call, staying about half an hour. I felt my pretty blue muslin dress was rather dirty, though clean enough for the maid of all work, but perhaps I thought worse of it than it merited, for Leyland said it looked "very nice." I told the gentlemen we were without servants, which they said was a general case in the colony.

26th.—To-day we had two Caffres working very pleasantly in the garden, but they have struck work under Davenport at the farm ; they don't like the man, telling him there is enough for them to do over here in the garden, and as he has no control over his own children, it is not likely he will manage the Caffres well.

We must get rid of him. They say "the man who can help himself is his own best servant," but I shall be glad to get a good servant to work for me; still, rather than have another "Frances" I will go on awhile.

27th.—We had an invitation to go to a ball to-night in the country; if wet, it was to be put off till to-morrow—a necessary arrangement with bad roads and a dark night. We declined, however, and as it is wet, I scarcely think the dance will come off. I am glad we are not going; it would require the ball-going love of a girl in her "teens" to have ridden out on such a night a good many miles, dressing after we arrived, and then returning in the same way in early morning. Yet read our day's work, and say is that better? "Yes, it is, for that is duty." Leyland wakened me at six, saying the Caffre was lighting the fire, and I had better give him meal for porridge. I quickly donned my dressing-gown and bonnet, ran out with the requisites, and breakfast was soon ready. It was a raw nasty morning; the only beautiful things I saw were two buckets full of pure clear rain-water to gladden my sight, left by the storm that had passed in the night, for such it proved, and yet I was told afterwards that the ball did actually take place. Our fire was good. I spent the morning standing over it, for papaws were spoiling, and had to be made into jam, to eat with boiled rice; and remembering Leyland's wish that I would make a little more toffy, I tried my hand again at that, and finally finished up by making some lemon skins into marmalade, when the fire took a bad turn and would scarcely burn. It was nearly twelve o'clock before all was cleared away, and then we boiled some eggs and made our luncheon off these, with bread and butter and a glass of wine. After this I rested a little on the sofa trying to read the *Mercury*, and then joined my husband in the garden to help him with his weeding till time to look after bacon and eggs for dinner, for the man who has been sent into Durban for meat, returned saying there was none to be had, as in hot weather they kill short, and only early applicants can get any. Owing to our being

short of servants we had had to do without butchers' meat for ten days, living off the good bacon and hams and cheeses sent us from home, with rice and eggs, of which we have always a large supply. Leyland thinks we shall be ashamed to look in the face of a pig now, after feasting so long on bacon; but I tell him I shall consider the breed as intimate acquaintances to be treated with respect.

CHAPTER XI.

November, 1853.—We heard to-day that the Treasury at Maritzberg has been robbed of 800*l.*, some of it belonging to the Governor and another gentleman. There has been nothing of the kind known before in Natal. We feel so secure that, if it were left to my husband, we should often sleep with the front door unlocked. As it is, we frequently do so with our bedroom door, which opens on the other side of the house, in order that Leyland may fire in a moment should he hear a tiger-cat prowling about. The other night one was grunting about after dark so close that, after watching in vain, he left the door a little ajar, with the gun close beside the opening and the revolver on the dressing-table.

November 7th.—Leyland has been absent all day, giving me so much more leisure, that I have actually been sauntering about the grounds with pussy and three chickens at my heels. We are going to make some flower-beds, and though this country's flowers are so beautiful, there is a charm when so far away in watching the growth of plants with old accustomed visage from home; therefore, these beds are as much as possible to contain English flowers. We saw the English cabbage-rose in a garden lately. We have some slips of a small cluster-rose; our neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, has a fence covered with it. We have the passiflora in great luxuriance, its fruit mixed with a little wine and sugar affording us many a delicious mouthful. The Mauritius pea makes a very useful hedge, it bears so abundantly, and though not to compare with the English pea, it is very palatable in soup—boiling the peas by themselves first,

and throwing away the water, which would otherwise give a strong taste to the soup.

We hear that Gudgeon has gone to Mrs. Bowen's as her servant. I much fear that he will frighten the old lady, for she is not one to put up tamely with his whims, and there is no knowing what he might do to her if he got provoked.

Our own life for some time has been the same kind of busy, unassisted work as I have detailed before. In reading over a diary of events which I kept at this time, and looking back upon my life, I wonder how I got through it all. I should weary my readers were I to write it out here as each event occurred, but perhaps I may narrate the work of one day:—

My husband had been very unwell for some days, but at last he fairly gave in, and was in bed with a bad bilious attack. I made and carried his breakfast, or rather his cup of tea, for he took nothing else. Then, after reading the chapter and prayer, I commenced drawing a flower, when the little boy from the farm brought the milk. This was soon seethed, scalded, and put away, and then he blew up the fire for me. He had orders not to tarry, so I was left to my own resources. Fearing the bread would fall short, I mixed and baked some soda cakes, and had scarcely finished these when the clothes came from the wash, and had all to be counted and hung in the sun to air before being put away. I buttered one of my cakes and gave it to the boy, for, poor child! he brought a note from his mother, saying she has just got another baby, and will not be able to wash again for three weeks! I daresay the children have hard work of it as well as the mother. By this time my husband was out of bed, looking very thin and yellow, but he felt it not fair to leave me to do all alone, so he came to look after the poultry and rabbits, &c., and while there, a man on horseback rode up wishing to buy one of our wagons, which he agreed to take. Presently another gentleman rode up to order sugar canes to be sent to him next day for planting. The mealies were in the wagon ready to go, but they

had all to be displaced, and the canes visited and dug up, sent off, and then I left the farm and went home to rest, unpicking an old dress to make it into little frocks for Mrs. Galliers' children. It was now one o'clock, the sun was very hot, and I had been racing about since seven, so I was glad to sit still, and the afternoon meals had still to be attended to.

The Caffre never came near the house till the work was all done, so I sent him straight off with the horses to the well to drink, for they must be attended to, and after dark that cannot be done. By ten o'clock that night I was quite ready for bed. My dear sister in England had said she did not think she could give her consent to my going to Africa if I should have to clean my own house. I thought there was little risk of that while we had means to pay servants, but I did not count on finding these so scarce.

Old Gudgeon did not stay long with Mrs. Bowen: only a few days. He sent to know if "the master" would see him, which being refused, he stalked off towards Durban, without once deigning to look back at the house.

November 9th.—Since I last wrote in my journal we have led the same kind of busy life. Gudgeon reappeared one morning, and was permitted to remain as he had been steady for a week, and has saved us some domestic work out of doors; but we have only two Caffres to attend to cattle, farm, garden, and house, for the farm white-servant is useless, and the weeds are growing fearfully. After our fire is lighted in the morning, and the kettle boiling, I send the kitchen Caffre to weed, and do what I can through the day without him, the garden being of consequence. The Caffre returns in time to watch the pans on the fire for dinner and clean them afterwards.

Yesterday we spent several hours trying to fish in our lake below the wood, but we got nothing. Leyland carried his gun and axe, while I had the prog basket and my sketch-book. We ate our bread and cheese and fruit beside the lake, amongst the long reeds, close to a

large tree, the branches of which were hung with birds' nests.

To-day I have been left quite alone. All the males are off on some errand, and only Mrs. Galliers' figure visible upon the hillside, as she goes in and out of her house busy with her work. Pussy is asleep on a side table, the poor lame turkey-cock is sunning himself in front of the house, the cocks and hens and chickens are rambling about in search of food. I think I am learning to be a very good poor man's wife. I have swept the rooms, made the bed, prepared breakfast, washed up, and put the clothes to air upstairs by the window, and there is a week's work up there, so soon as I have courage to begin.

During this month (November, 1853) we made a visit to Maritzberg, the capital of Natal, and the place of residence of the Governor and those employed under him. We stayed at the house of our friends, the Collins's, and of course made the journey on horseback (fifty miles), sending our boxes by wagon. The house is on the outskirts of the town, with a beautiful garden, where whole hedges of fine roses, pomegranates, fig-trees, and willows grow luxuriantly. Peach-trees grow well, and were in abundance with the fruit, not yet ripe; geraniums and verbena were flowering twelve feet high. The place had been sadly neglected, and run to waste and ruin, when our friends took possession. We enjoyed our visit very much, though servants were about as scarce as with us.

There is a very devoted lady working amongst the Caffres, a Miss Barter, deeply imbued with the desire to work in the cause of her Saviour. She dresses in the style of a sisterhood, in a close bonnet, with small white linen collar and cuffs on her black silk dress of a peculiar shape. She has been studying the Caffre language for six months, and, having a talent for languages, I am told that she has quite mastered its difficulties. So energetic is she that, even in this warm climate, she will walk four miles to spend the day in a Caffre craal, and I am told she sleeps on a Caffre mat on the bare ground.

The Caffres hear her gladly, but her brother told me she is not at all sure of doing them any good, though such is her sole object.

She proposes buying some children from their parents, and restoring them at sixteen years old, educated in the principles of Christianity, to instruct and influence their own people. The Bishop sanctions her plan, I believe, as does also Mr. Shepstone, than whom the Caffres have not a better friend.

Maritzberg is a poor place for a chief town, but it will grow. The climate is cooler than about the bay; indeed, there seems to be a regular ascent from the coast inland to the Drakenberg Mountains. Maritzberg is often visited in winter by frost and snow, and the temperature is generally lower than about Durban.

December 27th, 1853.—I am sitting on the door-steps under our deep roof, sheltered from the intense heat of the sun this scorchingly hot day, the thermometer 78° in our cool, shady, and airy room. I walked over the ploughed field at two o'clock, seeking for my husband, and the ground burnt my feet through my shoes. I found no Leyland and no Caffres. The heat had sent them down to Black Garden to clean the sugar-canes, so I returned home with a handful of tomatoes, which I popped into the soup-pan, and presently my husband's whistle sounded from quite an opposite direction to that I had been directed to take. A Caffre followed him, bearing the caraway plant, whose seed is now ripe. The Caffres even had found the sun too hot on the hill, so after a visit to Black Garden and Lower Garden, in the valley, thence through the wood to the lake, where they enjoyed a bathe, calling my husband a "Mochele bos" (i. e. "Good master"), they returned home for "scoff" (i. e. food), and showed their sense of his kindness by returning to their work without requiring to be hunted out of the kitchen as usual.

The Caffres like my husband for their master; he makes a joke with them now and then, when they laugh and enjoy the fun, and so long as he is with them and firm in what he requires to be done, they work well.

Under the farm-servant's superintendence they often sit on the ground snuffing, and he does not interfere much ; thus they feel no respect for him. They obey me better, and when my husband is away I occasionally go and stand beside them, which they do not dislike. I often stand a quarter of an hour at the stable, while "Bonnet" cleans and attends the horse.

We have just taught stupid Bonnet to be a little useful and handy, and to comprehend a few English words and signs. It will be provoking if he sets off to his craal next, but I quite expect he will, and we shall have to begin again with another ignoramus. I have come to the conclusion that English servants are "no good" here. The only decent ones are married, and have their own families to attend to. One can never depend on having the work done by them. Mrs. Chick has undertaken to make us comfortable after the New Year, while her husband superintends the farm.

While we had plenty of rain to water the earth the Caffres had all gone off to their craals to eat the newly-ripe mealies, so the planting was kept back ; now there are plenty of Caffres, but no rain ! The farm is looking quite beautiful again, the crop of chalots magnificent, the arrowroot and sugar-canes as well as they can look, and alas ! no market for them. The extreme poverty of the place is its drawback. One colonist after another is finding his way to other shores, chiefly to Australia ; none coming in just now, and unless the tide changes, Natal, and all in it, will fare but ill.

I do think the climate—lovely and charming as it is —very wearing and enervating, with all the work that has to be done ; but I enjoy it.

We had no plum pudding on Christmas Day. We ate our roast beef and calabash and our papaw tart with relish, and drank all your healths. We rode into church in the morning, and partook of the sacrament. Most people made a holiday. We were invited to a picnic, but rode home quietly, and Leyland with the Caffre planted arrowroot all the afternoon. Old Gudgeon ha gone off for his Christmas holiday. He solemnly

assured us that he would not get drunk, but return after a round of calls. It is no use stopping a man like Gudgeon, so off he went with a shilling in his pocket to "get the sodden off his mind, and have a little chat about Judy" and things in general. Alas for him, he did appear this morning; but it was only to turn the horses out to grass, and let the fowls out, and be off again. I daresay he will get put in "the Trunk" again, where I hope Leyland will let him remain.

I have just been out to bid Bonnet water the horses, and attend to them. Little Galliers, our neighbour's child, has come for the piece of cake I promised him. He is three years old, takes care of himself all day, and sometimes helps to look after the baby. He learns to be very acute and intelligent in consequence of his independence; his mother sends him to our kitchen to fetch a lighted piece of wood wherewith to light her fire! The other evening he was gathering feathers, when I told him it would soon be his bedtime, and he had better go home. He set out at once; but, something taking me out to the kitchen, I saw the child take up a burnt stick, blow it, and lay it down,—then he tried another without success. The fire was nearly out. I found one for him, but it was very short; however, he carried it home quite safely. He got a severe lesson on Saturday in *meum* and *tuum*. He ran off with an assegai from our door, which belonged to a strange Caffre. No one saw him; but the Caffre with great acuteness said to me in very broken English, "Baby take." I could not understand, so he repeated in a question, "You baby take, piccanini?" I remembered the child had been about, and sure enough he had taken it. His mother told me to-day that she flogged him soundly, and sent him supperless to bed, forbidding him to come near our place all next day. Such is the practical training a colonial child gets.

I have been drawing a few flowers lately as patterns for work I intend beginning when materials arrive. They are roughly enough coloured, but the character of each flower is faithfully preserved. I do not much fancy sketching here, the light is too strong, and variety of colour not sufficiently tempting after former days in

the Vorarlberg. I wish I could have sketched the Caffres' first view of themselves in a looking-glass the other day; they are such children of nature. They laughed, put their fists to their mouths, shrugged shoulders, and played all manner of antics to see if the one in the glass did the same. They ran away half ashamed, and back again for another look. It is a sad pity we cannot talk to them and open their minds to the chief end of life, for they are simple and honest until corrupted, and, having no worship to be displaced, seem just ready to receive the knowledge of the God of Truth. But they are peculiar, and very reasoning people, earthly, worldly, grovelling reasoning. Those who have devoted themselves to them find the work of conversion a much harder task than they had supposed. I wonder what Miss Barter will accomplish? She has enthusiasm enough, and her brother says she has even acquired the curious "clicks" in the Zulu tongue. There is a nice little well-filled chapel for coloured people in Maritzberg, and another in Durban; but the amount of real good done is very doubtful, and must be very disheartening to those whose hearts are in their work.

December 31st, 1853.—I am astonished in looking back, and desire to be grateful. How smoothly my life has run all these many years; how I have been cared for and amply provided for; my cup running over with mercies, and I never found it out. God's eye and hand are still over us, and will support us through our many earthly cares and troubles. What is it we are all doing? Is it not a desired haven we are hoping to gain? If only an earthly haven we are striving for, still that animates our thoughts and wishes to a kind of longing; but if it be indeed to our heavenly haven we are really looking forward, how insignificant do all earthly pleasures, treasures, miseries even, become! To be provided for from day to day should content us, though I cannot help at times wishing for a little certainty for to-morrow, which is want of trust. The small certainty I should just now like to possess is this: that some day we may have enough means to return home to settle in England among all our dear friends again.

CHAPTER XII.

New Year's Eve, 1854.—We are working under a broiling sun, with thermometer from 70° to 80° in the shade; though after a cold, wet rain we slept under a blanket last night! Leyland was out soon after five this morning planting arrowroot, cleaning sugar-cane, &c. When I rose shortly after, I missed my favourite kitten that sleeps under the house. As it was a good little kitten, stole nothing, nor jumped on the table, I was sorry, fearing it had got lost, as I let it follow me to the farm yesterday, and the love of travel is strong. When Leyland returned for breakfast Caffre Tom told him he had seen a tiger take it about six o'clock or later. Leyland tracked the tiger's foot-prints a few yards into the bush round the house, and there sure enough was little pussy lying without its head, which was "clean gone," all fresh and bleeding. He has poisoned the remains, and we hope the tiger will return for his other mouthful. As I had seen Tom pass, I must have just missed seeing the tiger, which was in front of the house, hid by the hill, where I was looking for pussy.

We have just brought in two fine pineapples for our dessert.

I have written of our visit to our friends at Maritzberg, but not about the great dinner-party we were at, at the house of the Crown prosecutor. He is a widower, and lives in a cottage, yet he contrived to dine about twenty people, all the *élite* of Maritzberg, including Sir Theophilus St. George. Such a great, heavy dinner as it was, with such loads of open tarts! But now I must go and see my loaf put in the bakepan; my seed-cake must follow; and then dinner: that is tolerably forward.

It is only to consist of eggs and bacon, pumpkin and greens, for meat spoils so soon at this season, that we had enough of it in the beginning of the week, and feasted Bonnet on it latterly. Mrs. Collins says eggs and bacon are a dinner for a prince, so they may do for us. We shall have a roast to-morrow ; I quite dread its being fly-blown, as we could not send into town early.

January 2nd, 1854.—I read such a beautiful sermon yesterday, that I have felt quite cheerful ever since. I was not very dull before. The text was from Deuteronomy: "As thy days so shall thy strength be,' showing that the strength must not be looked for before it is required ; in other words, the folly of anticipating evil, which (should it come) will bring also the power to bear to those who trust in the Lord.

What would you think of having to cook your own New Year's Day dinner, with only a Caffre to watch the fire and clean the pans? I did it yesterday, and have done it for a week, and frequently before. I remember reading, while on our voyage out, an emigrant's description of her servant sitting sewing in her hut, while the mistress did the work. I could not understand it then, but I do now. A married woman living in a hut near at hand can easily make excuses for staying away from work. Whenever a wet day comes she leaves you to fight it out as you can by yourself. But I must tell of our New Year's Day dinner. No plum pudding ; but a nice roast of beef, yam, greens, and tomatoes, artichokes and melted butter, cheese, and dessert. While I was looking after these good things, Leyland begged I would always enter by the other door. Of course I was prepared for a surprise, and so I found it. He had laid out a beautifully dressed dessert: a pineapple, sweeter than any in England, was surrounded by a wreath of flowers, chiefly scarlet ; a plate of very fine granadillas similarly dressed to match, and—a bottle of champagne on another plate, a white napkin neatly pinned round it, with a wreath of the handsome scarlet and yellow Indian-shot flower. It looked quite gorgeous and gala, and after admiring some time, I wished that some one—

no matter who—would come in and see. Leyland bethought him of our honest neighbour and tenant, Mrs. Galliers. We sent Bonnet to fetch her, and while she was changing her gown Mr. James, from Durban, came in to ask us to join a picnic to-day, and see a Caffre dance and eat some oxen. I was sorry not to see the savage sight; but our new farm servant comes to-day, and so we had to stay to do our business at home.

I walked over to comfort old Mrs. Bowen instead. She is full of troubles, without a living soul to help her with anything. Dear old excellent Christian lady! She is somewhat hard to live with, if all tales be true. She has too much spirit of resistance and too little patience.

To return to our dinner, Mrs. Galliers came in looking very neat and nice in her close straw bonnet, not pretending to be anything but what she is. Presently her husband passed the window with the two children (we had thought he had gone to town), so we called him in, and they all drank the new year. The little boy got a lump of seed cake. Baby sat very good and pleased on her father's knee, while Mrs. Galliers, of her own accord, washed up all the glasses and china plates, making things tidy. Then they said, "Thank you," and went off home, Mrs. Galliers having tasted champagne for the first time in her life, and I think we made them happy.

That troublesome old rogue Gudgeon has not made his appearance since Christmas Monday, and I hope he will not now, for his going off in this way does more harm than his hard work does good. I have been helping to look after rabbits, horses, and fowls, for Leyland has been too busy to do all Gudgeon's work. The man has left his cottage in such a filthy state, that, in order not to disgust my own house Caffre, I am going to take one who is to leave in two days to clean it out. We do not know what has become of Gudgeon. He has not been seen in Durban, and is not in "the Trunk." We suspect he has wandered up the country to Captain Stephenson's again, for a little change and a promise of grog.

January 3rd, 1854.—It is evening; and were Ley-

land less interested in a plan he is making of his sugar and arrowroot plantations, to send to his mother, it would be bedtime, as my winking eyes attest. A thunder-storm is going on, with deep rolling thunder and vivid lightning flashes. But we hail the rain at nights gratefully. It will water the newly planted crops and fruit-trees beautifully, when we feared the dry season was setting in, and the want of Caffres had thrown the work late.

I was at such a comfortable family party in my dreams last night—New Year's dinner at home, with all the members of our family and the married ones assembled. I knew each one, yet none was like the real one; J. had fair ringlets, a long face and handsome profile, while her husband had black hair and whiskers. J. remarked on my happy expression of countenance, as if it came from within, and I told her it was a happiness which all might gain. It is singular how content and happy I have felt since reading that sermon on New Year's Day. I trust I may never forget it, and that grace may be given me to feel perfect faith in the promise, "As thy days so shall thy strength be."

I must tell you what has been my work to-day. When it was near time for my husband to return from the farm for breakfast, I gathered some parsley, chopped it up, beat up some eggs, and made ready for one of "Fleda's" omelettes. Then I fried some bacon and cold potatoes, made tea, and finished the omelette, which we ate with relish all hot and comfortable. This over, I mixed the loaf and seed cake, set them to rise, and came in to wash the china and glass. Then I took Caffre Tom up to Gudgeon's cottage by the stable, having undertaken to see it cleaned out, and a horrible mess we found. Tom did all the hard work; but I never can be idle where a pair of hands are wanted, and it took us till two o'clock to get it done. Meantime I bethought me the rabbits had been forgotten, and went and fed them. You must imagine a good step, under a hot sun, between each place visited. I returned to the house for bread and cheese, and granadillas, so nicely

arranged by Leyland, who had also returned while the Caffres went to "scoff." Bonnet had been making his knives and pans shine, and had swept the house. I made the bed, then prepared our dinner, Bonnet scraping the potatoes. I tried my hand for the first time on a small suet dumpling, which, though perhaps not quite orthodox, turned out so good, and my bread which Bonnet baked, so light, that I felt quite elated, and got abundant praise from my husband. Of course I laid the table-cloth; but, as George used to say, "that is done in five minutes."

CHAPTER XIII.

I HAVE been reading with interest some manuscript poems of Mrs. Bowen's, which she kindly lent me yesterday. There are some beautiful lines written upon the Rev. Mr. Close, of Cheltenham, on the occasion of his entering his new house close to Christchurch. She told me they were printed and sold for threepence a copy for some charity, but she did not write them for that occasion. The ideas are beautiful, and the verses read well.

The 27th of November last was her seventy-sixth anniversary, when she wrote some lines she showed me, being, as she said, "in such a peaceful, happy frame of spirit," a case, I fear, not too frequent with her active, resisting spirit. The subject of the lines is "Grey Hairs," and as I have a copy of them in her own handwriting, I will repeat them here, even though they may have appeared, as hers occasionally did, in the *Natal Mercury*. She must be a strange mixture. All her pieces of poetry are of a strictly Christian and religious tendency; even her droll pieces have serious reflections, displaying strong faith and hope, yet can she not command her temper or her tongue on the most trifling provocation, while her letters and conversation are a strange mixture of wit, satire, sarcasm, humility, love, and hate. I have never met with so interesting and singular a character, and with it all, so delicate, refined, and generous a mind. She welcomes you into her little hut with the grace and dignity of a duchess; spreads the table-cloth, brings out wine and cake or bread, as it may be, with a little fresh butter, and gently asks you to partake. Her gardener lives in

a cottage outside. She engages him by the week, gives high wages, and he is a sort of general servant, but as she will not yield the twentieth part of an inch from her own way, she grows angry and dismisses other servants before they have had a chance of learning her way; they revenging themselves by provoking her in all possible ways, and exciting that temper which they all dread. Yet is she daily looking to her end with loving trust and faith in her Saviour, and often oppressed with sorrow and humility at her own weakness. She is learning severe lessons here in the wilderness, alone in the world, helping herself when often she has no creature to help her, dining off bread and butter and an egg boiled in her "Etna," sweeping out her own floor, and making her own bed! She feels that she has not a friend in the world; yet she writes to one or two in Europe as dear to her still, and she clings to our friendship, sending almost daily notes, telling of all her distresses and accidents and discomforts, often in the most ludicrous manner, as if she gained amusement from the narration, which I do believe she does. This is, indeed, a strange fate for a gentlewoman at seventy-six years of age!

GREY HAIRS.

BY MRS. BOWEN,

On her seventy-sixth birthday, 1853.

"Grey hairs may come, and lightly clustering lie,
But manhood's beauty is not marr'd thereby;
The energies of mind are still the same,
The skilful search of science still pursued,
Owning the great Creator, wise and good:
With steady purpose, that each work shall be
For present good, and immortality!

"They may tell tales, indeed, of joys or woes,
Perils by land and sea, or savage foes,
In climes where pestilence delights to dwell,
And every hour sighs some sad farewell;
Hints they may give of what such trials bring,
Or from a nearer, dearer source may spring
The heart's deep tenderness midst severed ties!—
But hush! touch not the chord of sympathies,

Tokens they may of bygone sufferings give,
The lot of all who live, or ever are to live!

"But no true Christian ventures to repine,
He knows these cannot pass the bound'ry line;
Though mortal eyes, all powerless here must be,
Faith, precious faith! will teach him how to see!
True faith, unwarped by man, so prone to fall,
Taught by our Saviour, God, as creed for all—
What glorious vistas opening through the skies,
Visions of bliss each coming thought supplies:
No sorrows, sufferings, partings, there are known,
Beauty and love alone surround the Throne,
The song of Glory ever sounding thus,
'Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain for us!'

"My song is ended, all too long I fear
To find much favour from the weary ear;
Yet, still one word; oh! may we fitted be,
And all we love, for such eternity!"

These lines were suggested after the visit of Dr. Stanger, a clever man—the age of Mrs. Bowen's dead son—who complained of grey hairs beginning to show themselves. In March, 1854, Mrs. Bowen wrote to me thus: "The sudden death of Dr. Stanger was a great shock to me; he was one of our earliest and most esteemed friends in this colony, and when I last saw him he promised to pay me another little visit very soon. I had even *hung up* some grapes for him, knowing he was fond of fruit. The grapes decayed, and he came not. Alas! for me, I have lost a friend; but *he was a Christian gentleman.*"

On the 7th of January this spirited old lady, in a note after a storm, writes:—

"I hope you fared better on Wednesday night than I did, for I was almost afloat in my lonely dwelling; obliged again to take down my beautiful church [a framed engraving], and to mop up the troublesome waters. I am thankful to say I am not greatly the worse for it, though plenty of rheumatic pains are keeping possession of my poor old limbs.

"My servant thought proper to make his appearance yesterday morning early, saying he only came to market

for me (though he had previously written to inquire if I wished him to return). I replied, 'No objection, provided he could sleep here at nights, and allow that the week consisted of seven days.'

"He came in a fuss and wanted to make his own terms, but I soon settled this by telling him if he agreed to my terms he might come for one week on trial; if not, that I would pay him for going to Durban to market for me, and there end. This brought him to reason; he is very far from what I like, but times are bad! The moon changed yesterday at full; I fear a continuance of showery weather, but hope not, as I shall be truly glad to see you here."

Here is another of her letters, written on the 6th of February, 1854:—

"Your surprise could scarcely exceed my own at finding myself really seated on a bench in the church yesterday, listening with most gratified attention to the addresses of *our* bishop! It was a treat, and a comfort I have long yearned for. There was such an overplus of people that I only obtained a sitting from the civility of a gentleman, who gave up his to me and sat on a bench outside. There were three infants baptized in the middle of the service, and plenty of singing—the sermon short, and most appropriate and affecting. I trust he is sent by the Lord of Missions, for it is evident 'the love of souls constraineth him.' Comparatively few remained to partake of the heavenly feast, but to me it was balm of Gilead—the rose of Sharon. I went fluttered and excited, for a bullock-wagon is not a composing or remarkably pleasant conveyance, but I was thankful for it, and to the friends who enabled me thus to avail myself of passing events. I should have prayed for our good bishop if I had been confined at home. I shall do so now with deeper feelings and greater fervour. I pray you to pardon me. I am still partially under the excitement of yesterday, and out of the heart the mouth will speak."

On the 9th she concludes her note thus:—

"I expected Mrs. Galliers here on Monday. I have not yet seen her. She was here on Friday, and then told me you were busy preparing for company. I did not think it right to trouble you, either with a note or to return the book you kindly sent. It was rather a disappointment, as you named a Life of Christ for my reading—and, alas! the court of Charles II. 'cared for none of these things'—a sadder picture of depravity, showing the need of a Saviour, can nowhere be found than in the circle of the Merry Monarch! 'the crackling of thorns,' &c. But I did not read it now! fifty years ago, I admired the pretty pictures, in the 'Memoirs' by St. Evremond—copies of the celebrated gallery of Charles's beauties. I have seen these at Coombe Abbey, the seat of Lord Craven, whom George IV. made an earl. I knew him and his two brothers—Berkeley Craven and Keppel Craven. What a retrospective glance is there! Well, if Mrs. Galliers will not come here, I must try to send to you, for I am anxious to hear about you. If you could witness my enjoyment in taking slices of your delicious cheese, I think you would be pleased—there is cut and come again for a long time to me, for my capacity for devouring is moderate, thank heaven!

"I have only one help, and a dirty, untidy being he is, though willing enough. Oh, that I were in my native land, where at least I might have a choice! Please to offer my kind regards to Mr. F., always reserving the first place for yourself; for, believe me, my dear Mrs. F., I am yours affectionately,

"M. B."

I think I must enter my reply to this letter. After thanking my kind old friend for a beautiful bunch of grapes she had sent me, as well as congratulating her upon having been in church, though her carriage was a wagon, I go on to say:—

"You will wonder what makes me always so busy. I don't know how it is, but each day brings its work, and I cannot be idle when anything is required to be done. I fancy that I know better perhaps, where and how to

order, and even to act, than such servants as we can command. Mrs. Chick is a very respectable, quiet servant, according to her bond; but I cannot help thinking of Shylock and the pound of flesh. She will do what she is bound to do, but there is no heart in her work, and she is no help in anything but hands. However, I might be worse off, so I must be thankful, and make the best of it. Mr. Feilden has a touch of lumbago; he could scarcely stir yesterday. We had two ladies and their husbands to an early dinner one day last week, and a large party of gentlemen another day, and company does make one busy. I never pretend to give fine or costly fare, but many people make much work. It is not, however, so much the work, as the extreme heat, that keeps me at home. A hot ride to Durban one day warned me to avoid such. I went to bid adieu to Mrs. J. B. M., who has again left her husband, to fight the battle out alone. She says she cannot get proper assistance here, in the way of servants; that three children——one of them a baby—as well as her husband and the house, are too much for her strength; and as the children must be thought of, her husband can manage for himself till she has provided some satisfactory way at home for them. Thus she leaves a door open for her return, but I think she has deserted her cause too soon, and may chance to lose her husband altogether.[1] Three other ladies have done likewise, sailing in the *Lady of the Lake*. Troubles and trials there must be in the world. I fear these ladies may find out they have not

[1] The finale to Mrs. M.'s voyage home was rather amusing. The vessel was detained some weeks at Algoa Bay, which has an open anchorage not pleasant to live in, so she and another lady went ashore and took lodgings, whence she wrote to her husband that things were very dear, and she had spent all her money, and wanted more. He sent her 50*l.* by return vessel, and she put her foot into the first steamer back to Port Natal, and returned to her home and her husband, with 5*l.* in her pocket. Her whim has cost 100*l.*, but her husband quietly says, "It will do her a deal of good." Everything now is "so good" at home, whereas formerly nothing was right or good.

left all behind them. 'As our day so shall our strength be,' if we look to the right quarter, and our duty lies where God has placed us. I am glad you enjoy the cheese; so do we: and we can give you another piece when that is done, for we have another cheese in a tin case still unopened, thanks to the kindness of our friends in England.

"I remain, yours affectionately,

"E. W. F."

CHAPTER XIV.

February 6th, 1854.—The *Lady of the Lake* arrived in the middle of January, having outstripped our mail, by making a remarkably quick passage of sixty-five days. Another vessel came in the day after her which had been 130 days at sea from London. The mail steamer has broken some of her machinery.

Our weather is at its hottest in Natal. Mrs. Miller told me that the thermometer in her sitting-room in summer is seldom under 90°. Our house is much better off. I have never till yesterday known the thermometer above 78°, but yesterday and to-day it has risen to 80°. We have always an airy draught through the house, and are cool so long as we keep within it. The early mornings are very lovely, with a pure and sweet, balmy atmosphere. We go out frequently at half-past five, about the time of sunrise; the landscape then, as in the cool of the day, looks very beautiful on every side—we being placed among green-wooded hills far and near, with most romantic and beautifully grouped trees in the valley below. A prettier stroll than that through this valley can scarcely be. It used to form part of our way to Durban, but my husband has cut a path through the bush, which brings us nearly two miles closer to town, and saves two terribly steep hills. As we went through this path to-day, the wild trees and their flowering creepers occasionally met over our heads, scarlet and yellow berries, the size of large capsicums, hung gracefully from the branches; numbers of white butterflies were fluttering over the tall weeds, and through the sunshine. Both Leyland and I at the same moment

remarked that they were like flakes of snow falling at the commencement of a great snow-storm.

In Natal are various magnificent butterflies of every imaginable colour and size. Our new bishop, in riding out to our farm (brought by our kind clergyman, Mr. Lloyd, the very day after his landing), said he felt all his boyish propensity for butterfly-chasing arise anew, and he longed to have a race after some which were quite new to him.

I hope the bishop will prove a blessing to Natal. He looks a clever, active, and vigorous person, and one who will not shrink from toil, which he will have in abundance. At present he views everthing *couleur-de-rose*, and is only anxious to begin working. First he is to ride through as much as he can of his large district, note its wants, learn its language (he has been studying hard already), then go to England, stir up friends in the cause, and return again with, he hopes, means sufficient to set afloat a good working staff, among both whites and coloured people. He does not know half the difficulty he has to encounter; perhaps that is as well. I hope he does not lean too much to Puseyism. Of that I could not judge in one conversation; but earnest and desirous to effect good, I feel sure he is. Popery has been making such rapid strides in our land, that one trembles at every new scheme of teaching, lest it should be built on a false foundation. May God direct aright! Caffres will be more difficult to Christianize than you would suppose of an intelligent reasoning people, without a God at all. You would think they were just in a fit state to receive one. Many of their superstitions seem to have had a Jewish origin, and many of their faces have a Jewish cast. They are decidedly money hoarders, and most penurious in their own expenses. I am told that some of them use circumcision. The pig is an unclean animal with them. Are they a branch of Abraham's seed—some of that which cannot be numbered? or are they some of the offshoots from Ishmael's tribes? or can they be a part (as some suppose) of the lost tribes?

February 21st.—A good heart and a strong, active constitution are good things to commence with in the missionary line, and our bishop seems to possess these. I trust he may be of great use. He will find the Caffres more difficult to manage than they seem at first sight to be. They will listen readily, but as to changing their lives, God only—not man—can effect that, though man must use the means placed in his power. Caffres are too shrewd and selfish for simple savages. They don't feel themselves to be sinners, nor to possess a sinful nature, and how are they to be taught their need of a Saviour—and that, too, by foreigners speaking their language in a broken manner? They have no fear of death, except as taking away the enjoyment of life, and I fear they will reason about life after death—to use a homely phrase—as a "bird in hand being worth two in the bush." The Christianizing of the Caffres is a gigantic undertaking, and with gigantic means, and the blessing of God, it may come to pass. The bishop told me that a young widow lady was about to devote her life and fortune to them. How long will her enthusiasm last? How long will she endure the want of the comforts she has been used to all her life; the want of civilization; the mud floors she must often live on, and all the habits of these dirty, ignorant, and brutish savages, which she must daily encounter?

I had a present of fish to-day, my husband carrying them out from Durban himself. As Mrs. Chick had gone to her own house till our dinner-time, and we wanted the fish for our luncheon, I had to get them ready for the frying-pan, while Bonnet, the Caffre, took the horse to the stable in old Gudgeon's absence. Leyland took out a summons against Gudgeon, but the man has hid himself and is not to be found. He sold his new shoes for drink, after all his money was gone. Bonnet is a quiet, steady Caffre, but slow; he does his work very fairly, and can be quick if he likes.

We nearly had a strike among the farm Caffres last week, which was somewhat ludicrous. The mealies, their food, ran short. A cart was sent to a craal for

more, which being charged double the usual price were sent back again, under the belief that the Caffre who sold them was imposing on us. But it seems mealies have become suddenly scarce, and Leyland brought home a sample of manna, which the Caffres pronounced very good. Upon a muid of manna following, however, they refused to touch it, saying they must have mealies. Things can't always be got on the spur of the moment, and you can't reason with a Caffre, so the difficulty assumed a droll aspect. Eight of them came in a body, and squatted round the front door. Two acting as spokesmen stood up, tapped first their mouths, and then their stomachs, and nothing could be more expressive of the Highlandman's "toom pelly" than the movement, and the look which accompanied it. But they would not eat, or try to eat, the manna, calling it seed for grass. We had to give in. They put up with mabili meal (i.e. Caffre corn), and we got them some beef for a few days, till Leyland could meet with some mealies. The scene was daily repeated, two or three Caffres coming to the house to protest.

Leyland is working hard at the farm, and all looks in good order, but whether he is doing good or not we cannot tell, for there seems no market. People are too poor to buy his sugar-canes for transplanting, and we dread the white ants will get them all. I am told that white ants do not appear in damp, level plains, where only in large quantities can the sugar-cane be grown well.

Our farm and garden are worth looking at just now, and many come to see them. I must try to give a description. Below two acres of sugar-cane runs the cattle-road to pasture, with a hedge on each side; on the opposite side of the road is near an acre of Mauritius sugar-cane about a year old, and below that again in the valley is an acre of fine yellow cane. Sixty or seventy orange and lemon-trees, nine feet high, and about a hundred banana, coffee, guava, fig, tobacco, cotton, and other plants. The farm road runs past the farmhouse, and on the opposite side arrowroot is planted.

This piece the farmer is to have for his own garden. To the left of it are about 200 pine-apples, 130 ready to be cut for the steamer; and to the right of it, in the old cattle craal—well trenched—is planted a valuable supply of yams. Adjoining them are East India melons, calabash, and pumpkins. Below these again about 2000 pine plants are coming on. Then comes a belt of bush, and Black Garden follows, containing one acre of sugar-cane, valued, as it stands now, to cut for plants at 100*l.* One acre of cotton trees not worth anything, but very pretty; and below the cotton again pumpkins are planted, calabash, China grass, potatoes, and again a little sugar. The man's cottage in Black Garden is just blown down, and beneath the *débris* are seed potatoes for an acre, to be planted out as soon as possible. A fine large garden round about our own house contains some of every kind, some grand beds of pine-apples, bordered by banana and papaw trees, both very elegant and Eastern-looking, with a fine mulberry-tree and beds of gay flowers under them. Within a fence of a thick, tall, well-clipped Mauritius pea are orange and lemon-trees at six yards apart, and a good wide road runs on each side of the house, with flower-beds in front, the magnificent cardamom, or "La reine Lucie," in full flower, spreading itself out in great and noble profusion. I think anything will grow in this wonderful climate. My picture would not be complete without adding that the view from each window of our light, airy, cheerful sitting-room is beautiful and refreshing—shadows chasing each other over the wooded hills and green valleys, or a magnificent sunset throwing a rich variety of misty hues over the landscape, from a deep gold colour to every shade of pink. The sunrise, the moon and stars vary the scene, so that I never really tire of the place.

My new servant is not worth much, though she means well. When my husband had to be absent one night, it never struck her to offer to sleep in the house or to ask if I should be frightened, though she knew there would not be a creature nearer than in Mrs. Galliers' cottage on the hill-side. I asked the Caffre Bonnet

if he would sleep in Gudgeon's cottage by the stable, to be at hand to take the horse, if my husband should chance to return ; but he declined, saying he must sleep at the craal with the rest of the Caffres : they are all afraid to sleep alone. My night was passed quite peacefully, and Leyland only made me anxious by not appearing till the night following. He had to cross the river Umgeni, which rises so suddenly as to be often dangerous. It is a very "magra" river. Knowing this, I felt uneasy at his non-appearance, and not without cause. He and another gentleman, arriving at the river-side, thought they could quite well cross at the drift as is often done ; but the river is treacherous, and their horses got into a deep hole. The other gentleman becoming frightened left his horse and swam to shore ; he landing on one side, his horse on the other. Presently my husband found he must leave his horse, or it would drown. Not being a swimmer, he placed himself on his back and floated into some reeds, there scrambling out, his horse on the other side. There is a ferry-boat which is used when the river is high, and on their return they hailed it, but without being able to bring the man across. After about two hours' delay, they went back to the wayside house, put up their horses, and thought they must stay all night ; but luckily a party came across from the other side, and they returned in the boat, the ferryman apologizing for his neglect and rudeness when he knew who it was who wished to go across. So my husband got home when I had quite given him up for that night.

A day or two after this adventure a boy of eleven years old, brother of my first servant-girl, was carried off by the legs by a crocodile while he was bathing in the Umgeni, his brother being nearly pulled after him in trying to save him. Crocodiles are frequent, and on my asking Leyland what he thought of while he was floating, he replied, "I wondered if there were any crocodiles about."

February 22nd.—My dear sister,—Your work is now in a fair way to be commenced ; but I am almost

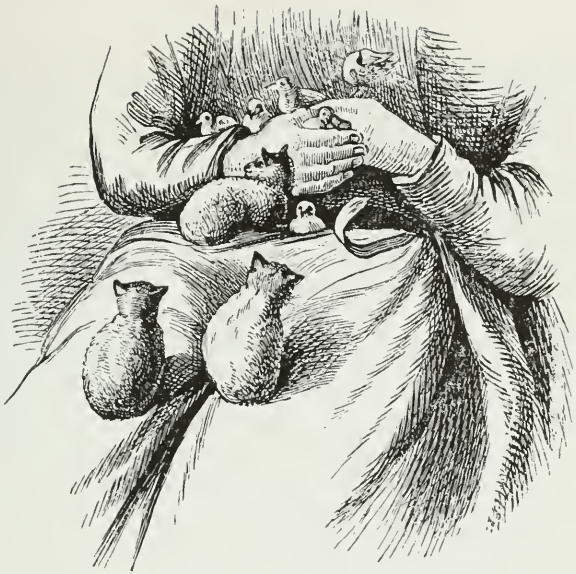
frightened at the undertaking. The pattern has been an anxious and slow business, so much depends on it; and I have been unable to introduce that particular flower you associate with one of my rides, though I tried hard. The placing, arranging, and tracing the pattern in thread on the satin ground has occupied a full week's leisure hours. It looks well in black and white, but that is too soon to speak of it. I would make it beautiful if I could. I arranged the wools yesterday. You have sent every colour I can possibly require, though the African flowers are very brilliant.

I think I am becoming acclimatized, but the very rapid sudden changes of atmosphere make it difficult to clothe safely. If I put on flannel, or its substitute, in the morning, I am oppressed by nine or ten o'clock; and if I don't put any on I feel a chill. At other moments I never miss it, just according to the passing cloud.

I have two little pet kittens that amuse me greatly by their antics; they mount on my shoulders and run round the gathers of my dress. I hope the tigers won't find them, but they have no white cat now to allure them from the house. It, poor thing, was killed.

We have been reading Mrs. Fry's Life, sent out by my kind cousin, Elizabeth. What a wonderfully active life! A mother and grandmother! to go about to prisons as she did, is most extraordinary. How inherent the love of God and her fellow-creatures must have been in her! How restless a spirit she possessed!

February 24th.—I saw a curious sight yesterday. My husband, in digging, had turned up some white ants, and immediately a number of large black ants came, and carried them off to devour them. Two would occasionally get hold of one, by head and tail, and never leave it till fairly carried off. Sometimes one would be seen tottering under its heavy burthen—a large white ant in its feelers and mouth.



LEYLAND'S LAPFUL.

CHAPTER XV.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,— *March 6th*, 1854.

I have sent you a little vignette, you perceive—Leyland's lapful. We have some pets evidently. About ten days ago a hen hatched thirteen lively chickens, which, hoping to secure, Leyland placed with their mother in a box close by the house. The second morning, however, when Leyland went out at half-past five, he came quickly back to beckon me to come out immediately. I seized my dressing gown, and rushed out, night-cap and gown on; and there, alas! lay the box upset, the bars broken; feathers and three chickens stretched on the ground, and one poor little thing running to and fro crying piteously. In catching it, another was heard and pursued, and as Leyland and the Caffre Bonnet caught them, they were given to me to hold; and thus nine, one after another, found a warm, snug resting-place inside my dressing-gown. The next con-

sideration was, what must be done with them? as no hen was likely to take them; so we brought them into the house, put them in a basket, let them run about a little, and had the floor washed after them—an easy thing, where there are no carpets—and you *see* the results. You would really enjoy watching the little creatures run under Leyland's or my hands when they are tired, and lie there so content and snug. They are all well and hearty, and I tell Leyland I think I make a very good hen. The chicks run after either of us, as they would after their mother. Leyland busied himself for two days making a house of reeds for them; very complete it is, and a hen with four chickens in it, but she will not take to them, so they must come into their basket at nights; and on wet days (like this day) must be indulged for a little running about the floor. They are very happy, poor things, and there is a large yellow one so benignant and solemn-looking, so full and fair, that I call it "little Richard," after Dicky B., whom he brought to my mind. Another little sharp, attractive, tender wee thing I call "Jamie," after young J. D. K. He is the leader of the rest, and always comes for sympathy and notice. But why do I write so much on so trifling a subject to you, my dear mother? It must be, because I know all that interests me will interest you, as showing you how my time is filled. Leyland looked so very picturesque on the sofa with his chickens, and the three kittens, who are half-jealous, half-amused, and not daring to play with the chicks, and the chicks lying close by them at times, that I could not help trying to make a sketch of them to-day, one having crept up to him after the other; and you see what I have made of it. After the chickens were secured, we looked about for traces of the marauders, and there, sure enough, were the footprints of two tiger-cats, a large one and a small one, probably mother and cub (tiger cats are really panthers, but people here call them tigers). Last night something took twelve new chickens from the farm, leaving the hen dead, with her neck tightly impressed by teeth-marks.

We have another pet—a lame pigeon that the horse

trod on, and broke its leg and wing. It is doing well. I took it up to the stable in the daytime, but it hopped back to the house at night, came in, to our great surprise, and was quite pleased to be put into its basket.

The weather here changes so suddenly that I fear it must be trying to the constitution. For example, yesterday was a lovely day, but oppressively hot, with considerable wind like sirocco, yet not hot; thermometer at 80° in the shade. I said that I thought all the starch would run out of my thin muslin dress with the curious heat! About seven in the evening a thunder-storm came on, and this morning was so cold and wet that we lighted the fire in the house, and I breakfasted in my warm merino dress, with my cloth jacket over it! We have had a fire all day, and nothing but its comfortable, cheerful aspect would have kept me out of bed till this late hour (half-past eleven), an unusually late hour for us. Leyland is practising his cornopean with Mary's music. Our neighbour, the carpenter, plays the flute tolerably and the cornopean a little.

I hope I may be spared to return home to England and see all the loved ones again. Leyland says, "We shall both go home," but I see no groundwork for such hope at present, and after my illness in the Bay I examined the question in a practical manner. Time is such a minute particle of Eternity, that I try to think it of very little moment whether we return at all. If we do so, we shall both have learned a few lessons of thankfulness, as we shall have seen and felt a good deal more of what others are called upon to struggle through.

We have had no mail now since January 30th. The *Sir Robert Peel* has broken down, and the *Natal* has not yet appeared: she has been about seventy days out, and no one knows anything of her. We are therefore in the same position as when we first came, the mail being conveyed to and from the Cape by any chance vessel. We are in so much worse case that, people having gone off to the diggings, vessels are much more rare. We have been eating sour flour for a month;

there is none good to be had. The holders of flour will be rather glad of the detention of the steamer, as they can sell their bad flour at good prices, from fourpence halfpenny to sixpence per pound.

We went over the farm to-day. The beans, arrowroot, and sugar-canes look beautiful, but, alas! there is always some drawback. The wild pigs ate two acres of pumpkins lately; the white ants are doing their best at the sugar-cane, and I expect to hear of the pigs getting at the arrowroot next. Yet there is something agreeable in the manner of life here. It is more like the freedom of seaside quarters in a lightly furnished cottage than anything else. There is no "behind the scenes," no "humbug." We go on wonderfully comfortably. I am becoming so accustomed to running out to look after the culinary department, that I do not much mind having to do it, except on very wet days, when the cooking, instead of being under the sky, is in the iron house.

April 7th, 1854.—Our pleasant friend, Mrs. Collins, has been laid low with a fever, similar to that I had last year. She is to come to us for change of air with her eldest girl, Jessie, as soon as she can bear the journey. I intended she should have our bed-room and we go upstairs, but on the whole she will prefer and be quieter upstairs, so we are making the *garret* comfortable, lining the thatch with strong calico steeped in alum to prevent its catching flame, and nailing it tight (with the carpenter's help). It will look clean and cheerful, and spare the fear lest some vermin should drop on your face while you sleep under unprotected thatch.

A family of young rats has found out our cheese-box, but traps are set in abundance, and they are being caught. A worse dread has half-entered my head lest a snake should be in the thatch, for my husband saw a long one jump from one of the posts that support the roof, and scuttle off under a hedge. This accounts for the disappearance of some of our little chickens. We have taken out the hedge, but found no snake, and the fear has almost left me.

My husband fired at a tiger two nights ago, when the opening of the door startled the beast, and it made off. Two or three of our hens fell victims. A famous trap came home yesterday in consequence, but the tiger was too much alarmed to return so soon. However, we hope both it and its young ones (it had two, we think) will return, and as many more as choose to step over our trap. We have been clipping the wings of the fowls to keep them in the hen-yard, but a good many flew over in the scuffle. But for the vermin our fowls would pick about and feed themselves, and live happily. There is plenty of space cleared, but the farther we clear the farther they ramble, and so get into the way of the vermin.

I have just been "copying" a beautiful red, white, and black beetle my husband has brought in, but I can give only a very faint idea of the beauty and delicacy of the feathers with which it is covered, for it appears to be in a transition state, or something between a moth and a beetle.

The men are busy "stumping," as they call taking out the roots of trees. It is hot work, and my husband has sent a Caffre to take them some cold tea to drink. Besides all the trees and bushes to be rooted out, there is an entanglement of weeds firmly rooted in the earth, and there are creepers so strong that determination and patience are required. I watched the Caffres at work for some time this morning, and could not help a sigh at the number of strokes required to clear a single yard of earth. The Caffres are always ready to laugh and joke over their work. They came upon the scull and bones of sôme former habitant, and a broken cruse for water, and were merry upon it, the merriment induced by our asking what they thought became of the man after death. Their reply, more than half by signs, seemed to imply he might have become a snake. My husband told them that if they were good they would go up, pointing to the sky, and if bad, down, upon which they laughed. What a field for the bishop! But if six months' hard study would enable me to converse freely

with them, I would gladly give it. It is grievous to be so tongue-tied, where I might have so many opportunities of awakening their minds. I long to tell them of the Saviour, whose need they feel not.

April 29th.—I have been dressing dolls for a charitable bazaar first making the dolls, stuffing them with cotton-waste, covering the heads with a kid glove and painting the faces. Two good-sized ones are very pretty, and now I am forming a class—five little girls are ready with books in hand standing on a board waiting for the mistress, rod in hand, and her seat, which will soon be added. I hope it will take well. The children who have seen them are delighted.

May 12th.—We have a nice little family in Gudgeon's cottage on a visit. Mrs. Duncan, the gunsmith's wife (who came in so heartily, her baby in her arms, to attend me when I was taken ill, and no nurse to be had), and her four neat, tidy children. They have come for change of air and country life, and are very happy playing about and learning to be useful to their mother, as they soon become in a colony, poor things!

June 19th.—April 5th brought February letters from England. Since then no mail has arrived in Natal, and only chance letters by sailing-vessels. The *Jane Morice* brought us, among other good things, a box of preserves and pickles, which had made the whole voyage turned bottom upwards. Not a bottle nor jar was broken, but more than half were empty, the contents squeezed up and drained as tight and dry as they could be through their bladders, and a thick yellow and green mould formed outside. The two steamers between the Cape and Durban are both disabled. The *Natal* has been unlucky from the commencement of her career, so the mails are more irregular than they were by the sailing-vessels. We feel almost on a desert island, we know so little of what goes on in the world. A sailing-vessel, the *Gitana*, brought news of the March mails being on board the *Natal* steamer ready for her start a few days later, but nothing more has been heard of her, and the *Gitana* has returned towards the Cape. People

are very angry because the mails were not transferred to the *Gitana*.

We have had a pleasant visit of a month's duration from our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Collins, with two of their children, Mrs. C. having had a serious illness. Her month of rest with us quite set her up again, and made a new person of her. Her children also greatly benefited by the change, and gave very little trouble. They were very good, playing out of doors all day with the little Duncans. But as we were so ill-served with either Caffres or white people just then, my hands were kept very busy to provide food for them all, Mrs. Chick seldom making her appearance till breakfast was over, and then staying as short as she could, looking like a martyr all the time. I enjoyed my visitors, and only regretted that my work would not permit me to wear my best dresses! One day, in getting some meat out of the soup-pan, the Caffre splashed all over the front of my alpaca dress, which I had just turned and made like a new dress. I instantly washed it; but, alas! it must have a more thorough scrub before the stain will yield. It has been a famous dress, and has done its duty well, and when I give it up I shall probably cut it up for a frock for Margaret Smith.

Smith has re-engaged with us. He liked his old master better than his new place, and as poor, stupid, lazy Chick is "sick, tired, and disgusted" with our place, he is to leave in a month, and neither he nor his vacant wife will be much lamented. I set her to score a fine leg of pork one day before roasting it, and showed her how to do it. After a row or two I turned to something else for a minute, and looking round again found her knife half through the meat, making steaks of it, she staring unconsciously before her. The first fowl she sent to table had its legs up in the air, and its wings ready to fly away. And the climate gets blamed when ladies grow ill! Accustomed to seeing everything sent up right in England, an active-minded, healthy lady cannot sit still, and not try to make things better with her own hands, and the lazy servant lets her do it.

A volunteer corps has been formed for the defence of Durban, in case the military should be withdrawn, and our gentlemen are undergoing drill at seven o'clock in the morning, my husband getting up before daylight to be in Durban in time. I hope we shall have no Caffre outbreak just now, when the colony is beginning to lift up its head a little; yet croakers think nothing more likely if the troops are removed. I do not think General Cathcart effected much on a permanent basis. The Caffres are something like the Canaanites of old when the Israelites were sent into their land to possess it, and to exterminate the Canaanites, and those who should be left would be as thorns in their path.

A very interesting account is given of a Caffre village in the interior, where they have, under missionaries, built good huts and a church, which is used also as a school. "A little learning is a dangerous thing," and I am told these Caffres are the worst and least to be trusted of any Caffres. Civilized to a certain extent, without religion for their ground-work, they use their learning for bad purposes.

June, 1854.—We are enjoying some fine oranges grown in a neighbour's garden. We sent for three shillings' worth, when sixty-three grand ones were returned as "a neighbour's portion." They should be ninepence a dozen. A gentleman, in speaking of these trees lately, said they were finer than any he saw in Spain; they are certainly much finer and better grown than any I saw in Italy or the Esterelles. I am told there have been upwards of 10,000 oranges in Durban from the Sea View trees, yet the trees look as if none had been taken from them: so much for the climate of Natal! They are ten years old.

While our friends were with us, we all went in a body to call upon our valued neighbour, Mrs. Bowen; our invalid on horseback, the rest of us walking. The visit did the old lady good, and cheered her when in low spirits. There had been some joke about the colour of my husband's eyes, which she said she had forgotten; so when I entered I told her I had brought my friends and visitors and my husband, that she might learn for herself the

colour of his eyes. She at once ushered us into her hut —for it was nothing more—and produced a bottle of port wine, and a cake of her own making. She showed us her garden, and gave the little girl a packet of seeds to plant in her mamma's garden at Maritzberg. Next day she wrote me a spirited little note in praise of my husband's eyes, but lamenting that she had neglected the opportunity to obtain some information about arrowroot. She said: "Previous to your visit my heart was at zero; there was a cause; but the face of a friend is never more cheering than in such hours. I felt and now acknowledge its power gratefully. But I was a little fluttered, and find I left unsaid what I most desired to say—and verily, said a great many most silly and needless things. Alas! it is thus always with me. So, when too late, I discovered that it would have been wiser to have sought the advice of Mr. Feilden as to removing my arrowroot. I was quite on the alert some weeks ago, but was extinguished by some words from the Bay. In consequence, nothing has been done. Is it a proper time to take up or not? I ought to be better informed about it than I find myself to be, having had a very large quantity in Paranaguá, and made much of it for home consumption; but I am daily made more sensible of my ignorance! If I should live a few years longer, only think what a poor ninny I am likely to be! I did look at the eyes, and own they are worth looking at; full of intellect, energy, and warm affections."

A gentleman rode out to call the other day, whose wife became deranged after her confinement, and cut her throat from ear to ear just ten days before his call. Poor man! he looked very sad, and was trying to drive away distressing thoughts by motion. We were afraid to ask for his children, but he named them. The wife, of course, was buried the day after death, and this, to me, is the saddest thought of all. No sooner is the breath out of the body than the grave closes over it, and all goes on as before. So soon are people apparently forgotten in a hot climate, and so sudden often is their end.

CHAPTER XVI.

THERE was a marriage in Durban yesterday. A gentleman met a young lady who was visiting a friend of ours, and thought she looked as if she would make a good wife. He consulted the lady of the house, who advised him to wait a little till they should become better acquainted; but he replied, "What's the use of waiting? We shall always be on our good behaviour beforehand." And so they are married.

Our friends left us on Saturday afternoon, and it has turned out such dreadful weather that I doubt they will be half-starved, half-drowned, and altogether out of sorts, and disgusted with their journey. The wagons out-span at nights, but if it rain badly they do not "trek;" so an uncomfortable, expensive inn, if they are near one, or a weary, weary wagon, must be their lot, without room almost to stir from their place. Mrs. Collins looked quite like a new creature when she left. The rest, comfort, change of air, and good porter (or rather, the bad porter, for it was not good) made such an improvement in her.

My husband returned from Durban that day very ill, with a blistered rash all over him from head to foot, and very sick. Somebody had treated him with shrimps, which he had eaten with the shells; and this was the consequence. He got better in a day or two.

I fear my journal growing wearisome, but I leave untold a great many disasters and troubles, and there is no word of exaggeration; quite the contrary.

June 26th, 1854.—We have had two of the coldest days I have known since we came to Natal, the wind

blowing strong and keen, while torrents of rain poured down whenever the wind gave the rain a chance. It beat through the crevices round the window in the room upstairs, and through the floor into the rooms below. Presently a stream poured in under the sitting-room window, and under the bedroom door. We mopped up, set dishes to catch the drops, and crammed gunny-bags against the floor to soak it up. We had, fortunately, an extra supply of wood indoors, so we kept up a beautiful fire, and Mr. Kock, who rode out just before the storm, seemed quite to enjoy our bright fireside. He had to stay all night, however, and as the wind blew fiercely in the room upstairs, he made his bed on the sofa in the sitting-room, and slept beside the fire. In the morning all the wood was burnt up; so Leyland went out to find more, and to make the Caffres bring it, for the poor creatures cowered shivering over their fire in the iron house, and seemed too much benumbed to do anything. I had some difficulty to get breakfast ready, as Mrs. Chick could not come over in such a storm. A pool was formed between the house and kitchen. I donned a pair of worsted stockings and my clogs, an extra petticoat and cloth jacket, my tartan shawl above all, and my large straw hat tied closely down over my ears and shoulders, and thus fortified against wind and weather, trotted backwards and forwards fearlessly, while the gentlemen in the house made the fire and coffee, toasted bread, and fried the herrings, while I, in the kitchen outside, boiled rice and curried fowl; and we made a famous breakfast, finishing about ten o'clock, having begun our preparations at eight. So much for a wet day in Natal. I got all washed up and cleared away before Mrs. Chick arrived. The day cleared up a little after a time. We read and worked indoors and out till towards 4 p.m., when we took a rapid walk up and down till dinner should be ready, looking at the new gate across the bush-path, &c., &c., and returned to a most capital dinner, consisting of good barley broth, cold chicken and sausage, meat pie, greens, potatoes, and suet dumpling. Sherry wine, Harvey's

sauce, and walnut pickles to flavour the whole, with splendid oranges and bananas for dessert! And now, at seven o'clock, we are snug beside "our ain fireside"—my husband's favourite toast,—he reading on the easy chair, with his toes close to a beautiful bright wood fire, I writing beside him, with my back rejoicing in the warm blaze. And now Caffre Tom (for Bonnet, alas! has not come back, though he promised he would) has brought in the great kettle for tea at about 7 p.m., that he may "go sleep in craal" till the same hour to-morrow morning, as the sun does not rise earlier just now.

June 28th.—Leyland wishes me to register our dinners for a month; but that would never do. However, to give an idea of our style of life at this time, I may make a few notes as I go along. We rose yesterday at 6.30, a dark morning. I lighted the fire in the house, put the cold coffee on to warm, and we were soon seated at breakfast with eggs and toast. Leyland rode off to the sugar estate, and came home at 6.30 in the evening, tired and vexed, and found dinner weary of waiting for him. After it I read aloud to him from "The Successful Merchant," a nice book lately sent by a friend in England. My kitchen Caffre is ill, and can do nothing, so I took him in the forenoon with me to call on my neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, with whom I stayed an hour and a half, listening to her fancied and real troubles, and left her, I think, cheered and comforted by having relieved her mind.

To-day we were again up before it was quite light, and again had the fire and breakfast to prepare ourselves. Presently "Tom" came, still so ill in his head that Leyland gave him a couple of pills, and sent him to the craal, and now "Breeks" is to try his skill in the kitchen. I have set him to clean pans to begin with, for poor Tom kept them very badly. I miss Bonnet very much, he was so clean. I suppose mealies are plentiful, for he promised to return in a month, and six weeks have now passed. In running out to the kitchen just now for a few bits of wood to keep fire in the log in our grate, I was greatly amused with Breeks—who is

squatted on the ground cleaning the pans—coolly asking me to hand the axe to him. It was nearer me than him, and I did it, knowing how impossible it was for me to make him understand why he should have jumped up to get it himself.

I have four pettitoes stewing away on our fire. I dared not trust them to the Caffre's discretion, and they were on an hour before Mrs. Chick made her appearance.

Evening of the 28th June.—I kept up my fire, while the pettitoes simmered away beautifully, working at Mary's embroidery and tending the fire by turns. At three o'clock my husband came home, bringing a beafsteak in his pocket, with Mr. Mellor and Mr. Kock for an early dinner. We sent off for Mrs. Chick in a hurry; got Mafame to light the fire in the kitchen, while we took a little walk in the grounds. Presently I left the gentlemen, came in to prepare the table, and soon dinner made its appearance. Broth, curried fowl, beefsteak, toasted cheese, salad, greens, and potatoes, with oranges for dessert Poor Tom wants to go home till he is better, so he is to go to-morrow to his craal.

There is a meeting of Durban Rangers to-night, so Leyland has ridden into town with the gentlemen. It will be too dark for him to ride through the bush, so I am alone to-night. When I think there is the smallest chance of his return, I sleep with my door unfastened, lest I should not hear to let him in. On one occasion, I was aroused by his touching me. He had opened the door, thrôwn down a pile of noisy things, a large bell included, which I had piled up against it to *alarm* me in case of attack from without, and I had slept through it all!

July 13th.—Another peck of troubles to record!

Two nights ago a tiger entered the cattle-craal, and killed a fine young calf. As it only ate part of it, Chick cut the calf up. He got part, and we get part, and part was poisoned with strychnine for the tiger's share next night, and as most of that is eaten, we

conclude Mr. Tiger must be dead: at any rate we hope so. There are more wild animals about than usual; the cold season has driven down several lions that have been doing mischief amongst people's oxen and cows. I dare not go alone to Mrs. Bowen's, nor dare I take any one, except in the middle of the day.

A neighbour sent us a present of a fine fish, so with a fillet of veal from our poor calf, I told my husband yesterday we were so well provisioned that he might bring a friend home to dine. He brought two friends, and Mrs. Smith brought her son Alec to stay to be our servant. She herself stayed to cook our dinner and get her own; and very nice everything was. Soup for first *entrée*, fish the second, veal—the only veal I have seen, I think, since we left England—sweet potatoes, French beans, and cheese. We passed a pleasant, chatty evening, and the gentlemen left early.

Before daylight this morning a gentleman rode up with a message, which he delivered through the closed door, wanting my husband in Durban. No Caffre was yet stirring, but with Alec Smith's help we soon lighted the fire, made breakfast, and the gentlemen set out. I sent a note across to the farm for Chick to follow with the cart to the sugar estate as soon as possible. Alec came back saying Chick was very ill, he thought with fever. I left the Caffre (here by this time) sweeping the floor, and walked over to the farm to see if Chick was really so bad, or if it was only a cold, and a glass of hot brandy and water might be useful. At all events I took the brandy-bottle in my hand, found the patient very hot, but with a strong though quickish pulse, and a sign of perspiration. I assured him it was not fever, but fearing to create it (he was so much excited) I did not give him brandy, but his wife made him some hot gruel at once, and I left him, hoping he would be able to go with the cart, as it was important. Indeed I was in a great fright lest he should not be able, for the beans had to be shipped before Saturday, and how was I to let my husband know our dilemma? Alec was rather

young and new to manage the business. I came home, walked up to the stable with a message, and saw Leyland's horse standing there! It was a great relief, yet I knew he too was wanted. He had met Gorge coming to see the proposed new road, and turned with him, and before he set out again all the Caffres came home from Springfield, having done the beans; so it was fortunate Gorge turned my husband, as I should not have known what to do. It ended in all staying till afternoon, when cart and Leyland went into town. Now a report spreads that the mail is in at last, so he will wait to bring our letters, and I feel almost too tired to read them if they come. Alec and I have done all the work to-day, and with my house-work and journeys to and from the farm, I feel quite done up. I have fed the fowls, gathered the eggs, half cooked the dinner, and waited upon every one, dark or light, and now am glad to sit quiet, mending my husband's socks, or writing in my journal. It is not much past seven; the moon will not rise for two or three hours, yet have I had my twelve or thirteen hours' busy, active work to-day. The weather is very lovely: it is cold for this climate, but bright and sunshiny, and pleasantly cool from ten till five p.m. The mornings are cold; I can wear worsted stockings, and cloth jacket over a merino dress! We burn a nice cheerful wood fire twice a day, but nearly as much for use to boil the kettle, &c., as for personal comfort.

July 15th.—Our long-expected mail has come in, but only with the March letters. We are glad, however, to find that the steamer between Natal and the Cape is to continue to run, which will be an advantage. We feel greatly interested in reading of this Russian war, and hope that the decisive and vigorous measures at last adopted will speedily put an end to it, and that God will again bless the arms of England. It seems a singular fate to be called upon to fight for Mohammedans, yet, from all we read on the subject, that will be more likely to forward the cause of Christ than if Russia, with all its boast of a religious war, should gain the day. That God's pur-

poses are to be advanced by this singular war I have no doubt.

I was much interested lately reading an article upon the war in China, in an American magazine called *The Living Age*. A great work is going on there in a most extraordinary manner. Missionaries are mixed up with it; but the zeal they inspire in the Chinese rebels appears full of superstition, ignorance, and wrong. Belief in Jesus Christ is one of their watchwords, and they demolish idols and pagodas, but they do not seem to know what Christianity means. It is still, however, a step in advance, if God permit the rebels to continue to succeed. It is thought that a pupil of Dr. Gutzlaff is at the bottom of the movement, and that Christians, of whatever sect they may be, are taking advantage of the disaffection of the rebels to instil more of their own notions and foment their discontent, and thus give themselves an opening. There seem to be five "kings" or leaders among the rebels, who, if victorious, are to divide the empire between them, and supersede the present unpopular dynasty. The "signs of the times" call upon us all to be prepared for great changes; 150 years or less will bring us into the third thousand since the coming of Christ. As Christ came in the end of the world, I have always thought it is meant that He came in the last half. There were 4004 years before, and thus fewer than 150 years will bring us into the seventh or Sabbath thousand. May not the calculations of great men upon the Apocalypse extend a little, so as to be brought to the beginning of the seventh thousand? But I will not venture beyond my depth. I was merely reasoning from analogy—the seventh day was to be holy to the Lord, a day of rest, and a day in God's sight is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Let us be ready; but the constant, active labour and superintendence of domestic matters are very apt to make the spirit of Martha prevail over that of Mary. I find it so; but let us strive for Mary's spirit while we do Martha's work. I feel great sympathy now with those

poor people who must be about household work at all odd or even times. These cares must engross both our time and thoughts, unless we let things look after themselves. The little trifling affairs of life are constantly engrossing me, but what can we do, when no one can be found to take the charge of any one department off our hands?' I hope the Smiths, who have again engaged with us, will be a relief to Leyland on the sugar estate, and that Alec, a good, steady boy, will equally assist us at the house.

August 2nd.—My dearest Mother,—I have been thinking so much of you lately, wishing you were here to enjoy our delicious weather. I have pictured you so often dodging about, just drawing in the fine, balmy, cool air, so dry, so pure, so fresh, so mild. Do you remember the climate of Naples in winter? how we revelled in it! yet we did not go out in the early morning, to have the best of it. This morning I was out before the sun had quite shown his face, and I wondered how any one could stay in bed. That is not early here, for the sun does not rise just now till seven o'clock. For some hours after six, the atmosphere is perfectly delicious. It is dark till six.

Leyland has had to leave me for a few days, to go one of those wearisome horse-journeys—forty or fifty miles a day—to his brother's farm. No sooner was he fairly started than, as usual when absent, he was sent for, a vessel having run ashore and wrecked. Mr. —— is certainly very energetic, and never spares himself in any emergency, which in this indolent climate is a qualification rarely met with. He is working hard at the wreck, to save the cargo, and rode out after dark last night to borrow all the Caffres we could spare. Unfortunately, we are short just now, and could only send three, including my kitchen Caffre. So I turned out early this morning, and took Alec Smith (my sole guardian at present), and went over to the farm, to expedite matters, knowing the spurring that would be required to get them off before nine or ten o'clock. Sure enough, we found no sign of life except the cocks and hens; so

we roused up everybody, saw the Caffres at their "scoff," came home again, and returned to hurry them away before eight o'clock. I really think Chick would not stir quicker to save his wife's life.

Alec is very handy, and a steady boy of fourteen. I have him opposite to me at this moment, writing in one of Mary's copy-books. His year of schooling has given him a start and desire to learn. Leyland takes his sums in hand, and hears him say three new verses from St. John's Gospel every evening. He is to have sixpence for each chapter he learns perfectly, and he hopes to go through the whole Gospel. By thus keeping him always employed, and making him feel we take an interest in him, we hope to prevent his forming acquaintances in idle hours who would do him no good, and to prevent his feeling dull alone here, away from his brothers. He is very fond of poultry, and we have plenty to amuse and interest him. I have had four dozen eggs in three days!

I have been so busy, getting the house cleaned and put in order, that I have no time to feel dull, except towards evening; and then this anxiety of my husband being wanted to direct many things (the wreck having upset the orders that he left) has prevented my sleeping at night, and given me a sort of nervous headache, lest I should not do exactly as he would have wished. Then, when I have felt restless and uneasy, how many times have I repeated to myself, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose heart is stayed on Thee." The wrecked vessel is American, the *Ariosto*, from Sumatra to Boston, laden with pepper and spices. She was out of her reckoning, sailed in shore, and now lies—not like a wreck—on the beach, behind the Custom House, about 100 yards from the shore. It seems quite a mystery how she could have run in shore at such a place, with a full, clear moon and not a breath of air stirring. They say they thought they were at some port or bay 1000 miles off! but why try to run in there before daylight?

My husband intended to return to-morrow night, but it will be hard riding; how little we know what a day

may bring forth! I said on his setting out, "I hope nothing will happen while you are absent to require you back." His friend replied, "Oh, nothing will." So they set out on their different ways, and an hour after all this happened. They sent after him to his first stopping-place, but he had pushed on. I dare say Mr. J. will do almost as well without him; but it would have relieved me from responsibility here in countermanding his orders.

Mr. S. will hear all about his business next mail. It seems an infamous colonial cheat, and gives an insight into the way in which unwary people are trapped by their sharper-witted brethren. I know so much about it, because I was employed as copyist of a long letter of information obtained from a lawyer in making the required inquiries. Mr. F. has been dealt with as villainously in a different way, and my husband pretty nearly so. Wisdom is dearly and fiercely bought in a new colony, but here they are quite a different class and style of people—cheats, I nearly wrote—from those we hear of in Australia, and we lead quite a different kind of life. I have been reading one or two books lately on Australia, and I must say that the comparison is in favour of Natal in many respects. The evils we suffer from are chiefly want of capitalists and want of labourers. Caffre labour is so fugitive. Caffres are such free, independent *gentlemen*, you don't know when to count upon them.

There has been a curious attempt lately to establish a scheme of Mr. Shepstone's and the bishop's. It has been kept so close that no one can quite make out what they wish to do, but it appears they wished to take away the Caffres (as many as chose to go) from Natal, and to establish them in a separate kingdom somewhere in a bordering country. Mr. Shepstone, who knows the Caffres intimately, and is greatly their friend, was to be their chief or king, and to govern them with modified Caffre laws, as far as they were compatible with Christianity or not entirely opposed to its doctrines, and they were to become civilized and, if possible, Christianized. No English, excepting those in connection with the working

of the scheme, were to be permitted to dwell in the land. It appears to me an entirely romantic fancy, fraught with fully as much evil as good. But the Caffres are as difficult to move as a sitting hen—a *simile* that has been practically brought to my notice lately. The plan which was first to obtain their sanction has failed, we are told, and not altogether to be regretted. Imagine a powerful nation of able-bodied Caffres, under an English king, looking upon our small colony of white men with jealous and perhaps ambitious eyes! civilized enough to feel their physical force, and probably not sufficiently Christianized to understand the Tenth Commandment! Or, fancy Mr. Shepstone (whom all allow to be a sincere, good man regarding Caffres) dying; who is to succeed? His son is a little boy, and what kind of a king would he be? The Caffres would prefer a king from amongst their own colour, and what then? The Caffre is indolent; he lives only like the beast, to eat and sleep, and pass through life with ease; but to do this he must have his land tilled, and to purchase wives to till his land, he must have cows to pay for them. He sells his daughters to be drudges to other Caffres, while the boys and young men go out to work for the white man, till they can in turn buy cows and wives. Caffres differ from beasts in one essential: they heartily share anything they have with each other, and eat out of the same pot without the least feeling of who shall have most. Snuff they share also; and I have seen my Caffre cut off what he thought would be his portion of the beef as it was passing from Durban to the craal, and the Caffre who carried it never offered the smallest objection.

August 4th.—I am still alone, so I must continue my chat while Alec writes his copy. I am getting on nicely with Mary's embroidery, and as the flowers I require for my pattern come into bloom I get the natural ones to copy if possible, but I fear some will be over before I am ready for them.

We had a very pleasant and interesting visit one day from Mr. and Mrs. Fynn, long residents in Natal, and well acquainted with Caffre character and habits. Mr.

Fynn was the first Englishman who trod Natal soil, thirty-five years ago. We sat late chatting over Caffre history and rule. I was ill in the night from over-excitement and interest in the conversation, and when I came to myself, after a long fainting fit, I found Mrs. Fynn sitting on my bed with a kind, gentle smile of compassion for my helpless state, and my husband at the other side. Mr. Fynn rode off for the doctor, who, when he came, said my stomach was out of order, and that I should soon be better again ; and so it proved.

CHAPTER XVII.

I THINK I must again introduce my dear friend Mrs. Bowen in one of her pithily-expressed notes. She says :—

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—

"I have only life left enough to thank you for the books again and again. A rougher day I have never had since I came here; rough work, violent winds, squalling brats, white ants, dust, dirt, and tar. Oh, dear! And, to finish the day agreeably, a new Yahoo is coming this evening to ask a deal and do little. But why do I tell you all this? I do not like pity, and help is far out of my reach. Pray don't pity, but pardon me. Hoping, nay, praying, for better things for you and yours."

A few days later she writes :—

"I thank you a thousand times, because you can ill spare even a few moments to cheer me. I know not how to frame letters for a female Yahoo, but I do know in what high colours Dean Swift drew their pictures. Pshaw! *he was a bad man!* I have done with balls, except of silk or woollen, long, long ago, and am not sorry to hear you repudiate them also. I do not wish to infer anything immoral therein, but I do remember so many little touches of envy, hatred, and malice, mixed up with *pleasure* (?), that their reminiscences are not amiable. Yet *I* have a strong reason to say little against them (tell you some time). I am pleased to hear of Mr. F.'s musical talent—all good in time and season. Dear Cumming! I wish I had all his works! By-the-bye, pray pardon my keeping 'Romaine' so long; believe me he does not lie idle on the shelf. Poor Mrs. G. has

left her baby to laugh or cry on the bed at pleasure, so please excuse this almost unintelligible scrawl, and believe me yours sincerely,

"M. BOWEN."

August 16th.—A ship bearing the English mail is reported in, so we may get our letters at last. Five months without home news! Our last letters were dated March 12th.

I sent Caffre "Jim" soon after seven this morning to fetch meat from Durban. He returned at ten, as quick as any messenger ever has done on foot.

September 2nd.—The pine-apples will be a splendid sight this year. About 600 are showing fruit. We must send them to the Cape for sale. I wish they could go to Covent Garden Market. We enjoyed one two days ago that would have brought thirty shillings at some confectioners in rare seasons. Until we have means for preserving some, I expect we may have to feed the pigs on them; but they make very fine vinegar.

Old Gudgeon has made his appearance once more. It seems he went into the interior hunting with Captain Stephenson, where they lost nine out of ten horses, and had but indifferent sport. A short time ago some tails—trophies of the spoil—were sent to my husband by Gudgeon, who wanted a change again. Instead of delivering them himself he sent them up by a little boy, and next day, seeing Alec Smith, he bid him tell his master that "if he would write him a note and say he wanted him, he would return and work as usual." The following day we were struck by the sight of a figure dressed in a red smock frock, a round hat surrounded with ostrich feathers, and with a long grizzly beard hanging down to his chest. In another moment we recognized Gudgeon, who was quite drunk. My husband told him he would not have him about the place, but that if he liked he might see if Smith would employ him on the sugar-farm. We gave him some coffee, with cheese and bread, and he marched off like an injured man. Smith refused him at first, but has since taken

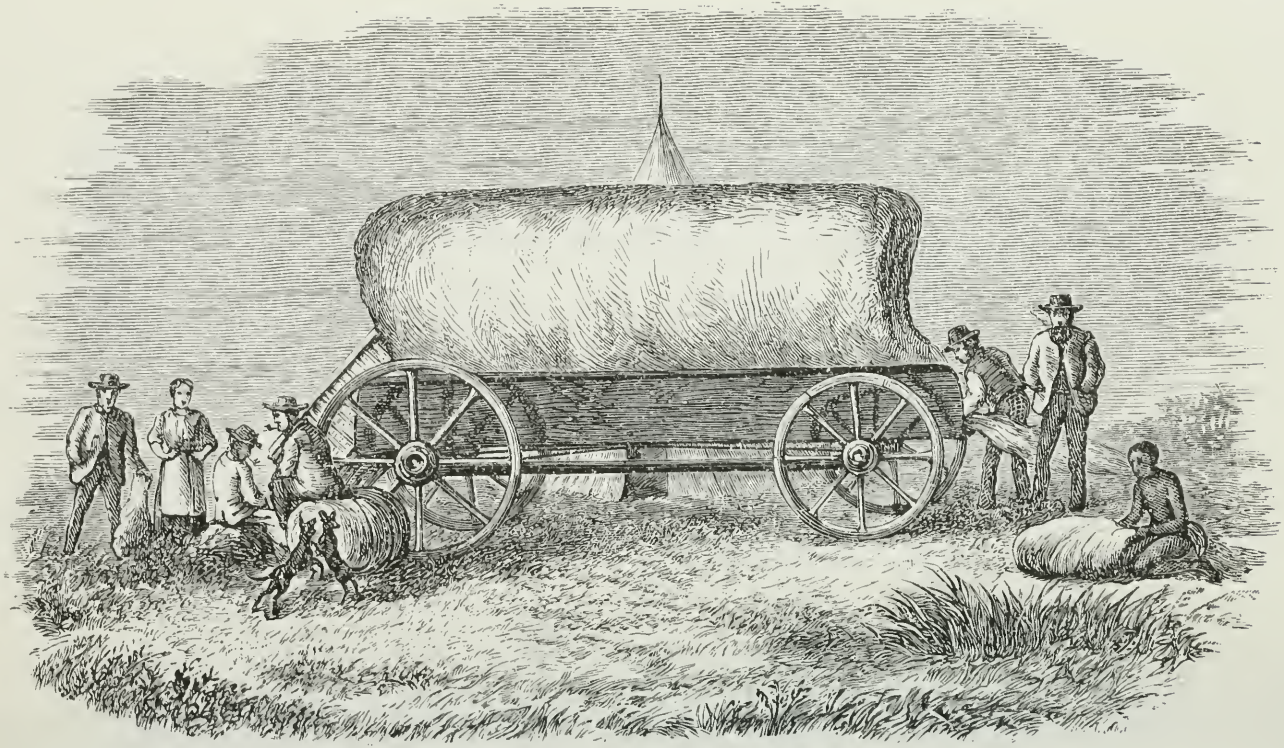
him to work among the canes so long as he can keep steady. He is more than half crazy with drink, and yet has a wonderful "gift of the gab" to moralize on men and matters. I am told he strutted about Durban for some days with a high plume of feathers and his red dress and grey beard, and made quite a picture for an artist. He has rather a good face, but alas for his brains! Shortly after we came to Natal he proposed to a widow with several children, who he thought would be willing to take him for better for worse, telling me it would be so comfortable for me to have a woman servant who would remain in her place!

I have a very nice handy young woman just now, wife of the man who is engaged to look after the crops and garden here. If they go on as well as they have begun we shall be very well off. I required some help, for over-exertion, when I thought myself strong and well, laid me on the sofa for a week or ten days, when we had none but young Alec Smith to do anything about the house. The boy did wonders. He cooked, baked, looked after the fowls and horses, and worked with the Caffres to keep them at it.

The hen-house has been visited by a tiger lately, which pulled out a great piece of the hen-house wall, and literally feasted. A trap was set and the hole left, but Mr. Tiger, instead of entering thereby, pulled off enough thatch to get in at the roof, took our large Dutch cock, and we know not how many hens, one mother and all her brood, and left two without heads and their blood sucked. It is provoking to rear poultry for wild beasts.

We have cleared another road to run into the former. It avoids two very bad hills, but is not quite so short. It has opened up quite a new view of our little home.

I found my new servant, Mrs. Orchard, a very active, intelligent young woman. Her husband had been employed to convey goods by wagon to the interior, and she accompanied him. She gave me so many interesting anecdotes of her life there, that I wrote down from her lips the following account.



SOUTH AFRICAN WAGON OUTSPANNING.

"Adventures of a party with a wagon conveying goods from Durban to the Mooie river in the Vaal district, beyond the Drakensberg :—

"On Saturday, the 2nd of April, 1853, two wagons were laden with goods, ready to start with the light on the following morning, under my husband's superintendence. They arrived in the course of the forenoon at Pine Town, where we joined them, and in the evening we all started on our long 'trek,' taking two days to reach Maritzberg (fifty-two miles distant from Durban), arriving there on Tuesday evening. Here we remained until the following Sunday, by which time three other wagons were ready to join company, also under my husband's superintendence, with a Dutchman and a Caffre to drive. We crossed the hills on the other side of Maritzberg that day, and stayed there till Monday morning. Thence we went to the Umgeni river, crossing it on the evening of Monday, and outspanning on its banks. By Tuesday evening we had crossed the Mooie river, and outspanned for the night.

"On Wednesday evening we crossed the Bushman's river, an easy river, and outspanned beyond. Saturday night we reached the Tugela river, the roads so far being fairly good for unmade roads ; the country varied, and presenting fine views. It took us exactly a week to go from the Tugela to the foot of the Drakensberg Mountain, over a rough, stony, steep road, with occasional swamps. On Sunday, the 24th of April, we rested, my husband declining to go on the seventh day any further.

"On Monday, the 25th, we commenced the ascent of the Drakensberg Mountain, a most arduous and somewhat dangerous ascent of one hour and a half. It was so steep that I was obliged to walk, or rather to climb up, my little girl of two years beside me. The mountain, which is exceedingly rough, with large blocks of cornered rocks spreading over the road, looked almost like a wall before me. My child clomb on hands and knees, grasping at one stone to reach the next. The wagon was got up in safety, but it is a work of some

danger. The road slopes so much that two wheels are generally off the ground, while the steps, or ledges of rock, oblige the oxen to drag the wagon up a flight of rough, steep stairs.

"The top of the Drakensberg opens upon a wide level plain, quite uncultivated, and without a tree to light a fire. Our supply of fuel had to be dragged up the mountain, behind the wagon, in what we called the trap. Besides this, as we outspanned on the top and had a long bare plain before us, my husband sent the Caffres down the mountain again, to carry up as much more wood as they could. The road on the top of the Drakensberg is very stony and difficult, but after Harrismith it is so much easier and better that one wagon was sent back down the mountain, and its load disposed among the other wagons. It took us several days to arrive at Harrismith. From Harrismith is a fine unmade road, so smooth and level that I could work with ease in the wagon, and got a good deal of sewing done. We overtook a Dutchman's wagon going the same road with his family, so we joined company, and went on together, and after some time we met a company of Dutch with wagons—several families encamped on the plains in true patriarchal style, their flocks, and herds, and fowls around them. It was the Sabbath, and they were holding worship together in their tents. The Dutch family in our company found acquaintances amongst them, but as we could not understand their language we could not avail ourselves of any intercourse.

"The next morning we recommenced our 'trek,' but had not proceeded far when we were alarmed by the sight of a party of armed and mounted Caffres. As they were going *from* us, the men of our party did not think much of it, supposing them to be a hunting party, but all day I felt uneasy, as if something was going wrong, and towards evening a party of mounted Crauders or Hottentots rushed down towards our wagons, pursued in the distance by a larger number—perhaps 150—of Caffres. As the Hottentots came up with us they

begged us to conceal their chief in our wagons; but, the Caffres being within sight, we told them we could not do it, as our own lives might be lost in consequence. The chief, however, sprang from his horse, threw down his gun, and jumped into the wagon, catching the Caffre driver by the throat to throw him down. By this time the hostile Caffres came up, and demanded their enemy. One threw his heavy knobkerry at the poor Hottentot chief and broke his back, while numbers of assegais were lodged in his body. The Dutchman then held a parley with the Caffres, and unspanned that they might search the wagons, and have mercy on our women, to which, as we were neutral parties, they agreed. They dragged the body of the murdered chief on the ground, stripped it, and took the clothes. At the same time a most fearful fight and slaughter were being carried on between the two hostile tribes, legs of men and horses were broken, and many left dead around us. I saw six men and three horses lying on the ground, and the Caffres told the Dutchman that they had slain seventy of their enemy during the day. They did us no harm otherwise; but they carried off our chambock and whip. While we were inspanning to resume our journey, the vultures gathered over the place, and began their orgies on the dead.

"Fearing the Caffres might return, and pursue us and our wagons, we turned from our right path, and wandered a long way out of our road. We wanted water, but could not find any, and when the moon rose we were bound in among the mountains—lost!—and had to outspan for the night. As soon as it became light we inspanned again, and by two o'clock in the day we found our road, our oxen and ourselves weary enough. The 'wildebeests' had eaten up all the grass, so there was none for the oxen, and the water was so bad we could not drink it. Six days the oxen had nothing but bad water to exist upon, and we feared we should lose them. We trekked very hard. We were now in the midst of the wild beast country: hundreds of springboks went bounding away at the sound of the crack of

the whip—a beautiful sight; lions abounded, we saw three lying near to where we had to pass. We went by very quietly, and they did not even rise at our approach. The fright I had got at the Caffre fight had so unnerved me, that I became ill for several days, and I cannot remember how long it took us to reach the Vaal river. The road was good, and we trekked very hard indeed to get over the river, for then we felt we should be in safety. The Vaal is a large, deep, swift river—heavy to cross. We got over safely, however, and outspanned on the opposite side. We now entered upon quite a different country. The grass was a beautiful green, and signs of a nearer approach to habitation began to show themselves. We passed a Dutch farm, and our companion being acquainted with the owners, he and his family went in and breakfasted with them. These people showed us great kindness. They sent out to us milk and bread, the wheat of which it was made having been grown and ground by themselves.

"The Dutchman's oxen being sick, as well as two of ours, the farmer kindly lent us some of his, to make the remainder of the journey, and we regained our own in good condition. Beyond the Vaal river is a fine country, and where the farms are established, and the ground is cultivated, the land is very rich and productive, requiring no manure. Wheat grows abundantly; fruits to perfection—apples, figs, peaches, and apricots; the vine thrives well. The farmers make brandy from the grapes, besides drying quantities for raisins; they dry all their fruits for export to the Cape, and make butter in large quantities. We cross the Mooie river to arrive at the Dorp, which is prettily situated in a plain or valley surrounded by hills, in the manner of Maritzberg, the town being laid out somewhat after the same plan; water is carried through the streets in sluices, with willow-trees growing beside the clear, beautiful streams. We stayed eleven months, living for the most part in a tent, even through the winter, when the frost was on the ground, and the streams were frozen over.

"This is a Dutch settlement, scarcely an English

family among them. Although so fine a country, we did not find it healthy. Besides measles, and hooping-cough, a yellow fever prevailed, which carried off many, and there is a very painful complaint to which the eyes are liable—a burning redness in them, so that they cannot endure the light. We all suffered distressingly from this, and had our eyes bound up. There are no doctors among these Dutch, who prescribed for each other. I thought them a lazy people, and very dirty. Many possess a little land and contrive to live upon it, seeming as if they would never rise to anything; but others are wealthy and quite 'gentle-people,' but they do not live very differently from their poorer brethren. Their servants are slaves whom they have taken in war from the Caffres. The Caffres frequently steal the cattle belonging to the Dutch, and interrupt their farming operations, upon which the Dutch rise in a body to punish them, and carry off everything they can lay hands on—the children to make slaves of, and to sell or use for themselves. I have seen even Caffre babies among them; they keep a bigger Caffre to nurse and bring them up. Those Caffres who are captured, when a good age, often run away.

"I nearly lost my little girl in the Mooie river. While playing about, she fell into a pond. In my agony I was on the point of jumping into the water after her, but a Caffre was before me, and rescued her when quite exhausted. We gave her brandy, and rubbed her head with brandy, wrapped her in shawls beside a large fire, and presently she recovered. A fortnight after, my second girl was born; the Dutch were very kind to me, and there were two Englishwomen who came to me, the only two in the place. The Dutch nurse who attended me at the first, instead of washing my poor little, *very little*, too-soon born infant, rubbed it all over with oil or grease, which made it smell so badly that I could not bear it beside me; so, as soon as her back was turned, I sat up in bed and washed it as well as my strength would permit, which so offended her that she would not come near me again.

"We lived exactly eleven months in this country. The climate is fine; the two winter months, June and July, are very cold. But little rain fell during our stay; but there are severe storms of wind which in a few hours will unroof the thatch, and blow in the chimneys.

"At last we got two wagon-loads of wool to bring down, and commenced our homeward journey. We took the old road to return—not quite so good as the other—but we were unwilling to go again over the spot where we had seen and been in the midst of the Caffre fight. The Vaal river was high, but we crossed it safely, and when we had outspanned for the night on this side, with our oxen tied fast to the wagon on account of the wild beasts, a lion walked peaceably up to the wagon, looked at us, turned, and walked away. A rough, rocky road led us to the Mill river which we crossed, and outspanned for the night along with a Dutch family for company. They were going in the opposite direction to the Vaal river (which we had just left), with their cattle and horses, to seek for a farm, having been driven out of the White Mountains by the depredations of the Bushmen and Caffres. An empty wagon crossed to the other side at the same time, but the river being high and dangerous, the Dutchmen feared to take across the laden wagon in the evening, and so we outspanned together. On the empty wagon reaching the other side one of the oxen dropped dead; the driver left it, and resumed his 'trek.' During the night, by the light of the moon, we could see two lions devouring the dead bullock. It was a beautiful moonlight night. The Dutchman was up looking after his cattle, and for fear of the lions, all the oxen were tied so close to the wagon-wheel that they could not lie down, while the horses were placed in the centre within, both as being more valuable, and because the lion will leave an ox to take a horse. His precaution, however, was in vain. A fine large lion sprang into the midst of the oxen and dragged a horse through. The Dutchman could not shoot it, not having ammunition for his gun. We had so little that we could not give it up for his protection.

It was provided by our employers for the use of their wagons, for our own protection, and for finding us food; we knew not how we might require it ourselves. We thought we were in dangerous company, so for our own safety we inspanned and left the Dutch family, and what further befel them I don't know. A morning or two after, while we were inspanning very early, we saw a troop of lions chasing a wildebeeste When they saw the white canvas of our wagons, they stopped, looked for a moment, and then lay down in the grass. Presently they rose and recommenced their chase after the wildebeeste, which had stopped when the lions stopped, and stood looking round. They chased it round and round the hills, but we did not stay long enough to see how the pursuit ended, being only too glad to get out of the neighbourhood of such dangerous company.

"We found good grass for the oxen in coming down in March, and we got on very well, but were detained two days on the top of the Drakensberg; the wind was so strong, and the rains had made the road too slippery to venture. We descended the steep, rugged path we had climbed up in going, the oxen slipping frequently. I stayed in the wagon with my children; the road was so dirty and slippery, it is not always safe to do so. I heard of one wagon which rolled over and over, breaking a whole load of crockery-ware to the value of more than fifty pounds.

"We had no more adventures on our return. We were detained three days at the Clip river by the swollen state of its waters, and the same at the Tugela, which we crossed while the waters came above the bed-board in the wagon! The roads were very heavy and rough; but our troubles were past, and we were thankful to find ourselves once more safe and sound in Durban."

Such was my servant's account of a "trader's" life. She told me she never felt safe while living among the Dutch, for she feared the Caffres might get the better of them. Several times they were out under the "commando" watching the movements of the Caffres, and they rather anticipated a skirmish when she left, but

that did not take place. She tells me the Dutch know every cover of the Caffre, and never fight openly or fairly. Their plan is to surround the Caffres in the night as they sleep, and fire upon them, and then to retreat to reload their guns. They call the English hard-hearted, for they say that if they see a comrade dead they take no notice and go on with the fray; but that, if the Dutch see two or three dead, they leave off directly. Their mode of fighting may be the most successful, and knowing the Caffres are only waiting a good opportunity for a like inroad, perhaps it is excusable, but it sounds cruel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I FOUND my new woman-servant a great comfort to me for a time, as I had a severe illness, which tied me to the house, and for some time to the sofa. Still, it was a trial to be at the mercy of my servant, and to see how much less neat and clean everything became, and how carelessly the plates, knives, and forks were washed. The waste in the kitchen, too, was much greater, while the appearance at table was not improved ; but it had to be put up with, and I had to feel thankful that my illness did not happen while I had no servant at all.

While still very unequal to exertion, my name was entered as one of the lady patronesses of the Royal Durban Rangers' ball, which the gentlemen of that body decided to give after they were fairly organized as a corps for the protection of her Majesty's subjects in case of need. They were called out by their colonel, the Lieutenant-Governor, for a week of hard drill, and a review was to be held at the end of that time. The bugle sounded for assembly at five o'clock every morning, and as my husband could not possibly ride in and out each time, it was decided that we should go to Durban for the week, and occupy one room of our old house there, and board in a manner with its occupants, who, for services rendered, had lived in it rent free for two years. I thought I must remain at home, I was still so weak and footless ; but so many kind messages came that I gave in, and it was hoped that a week's change would be of service to me. So I packed up my clothes and set off on steady old Fox, my husband having sent word we should be in at ten or eleven

o'clock on Saturday morning (about the first week in October, 1854). At eight o'clock that morning we got a message from the occupants, hoping that we should not come before four or five, "as they could not sooner be ready" for us. Our plans, however, were made, and I said I could sit on Mrs. T.'s sofa till the bedroom, which we had furnished, should be quite ready. We had borrowed a bedstead and sent a mattress, and we had a storeroom of useful articles locked up in the house. We sent in the cart with sundry trifles, meaning to be content with very little. Imagine our amazement on arriving at eleven to find the house utterly empty, with a Caffre sweeping out the dirt and rubbish! The tenants flown, and not one word of message nor one comfort left in any shape! Fancy if I had waited till four or five o'clock (it gets dark soon after six) and had gone in then, with my helpless legs, expecting dinner and a bed, and had found the house empty, what should we have done? As it was my husband got out two chairs from our storeroom and put me on them, while he sent the cart straight back for Mrs. Orchard, a table, a pan or two, some wood, another mattress, and as few necessaries as possible. He then went into the town to buy beef, a kettle, and a few sundries, and meeting our old farm-servant, Smith, he told him our situation. Had the people only said they could not wait on us, Mrs. Smith was ready to come. Smith came and asked me what he could do to help, so I got him to pull out two boxes and a tall basket, and we set them in one room as table and washstand. He re-swept the house, and then left me. We brought out all our chairs, and with the aid of towels on the boxes, the room looked tolerably comfortable before the purchases, carried by Caffres, arrived. By this time it was three o'clock and I was hungry; so, as the bread had been forgotten, off my husband set again, and soon returned with a couple of loaves under his arm, and opening a box of sardines and a bottle of porter from the storeroom cupboard, we made ourselves comfortable, and laughed at the very colonial trick that had been played us. I thought of

Mrs. Nickleby in the empty house in London, so well described by Dickens.

At half-past five the cart returned with Mrs. Orchard and her baby. She left the other child at its grandmother's on the way, and we presently got some dinner; and, barring the opening scene, we were better without the T.'s in the house. They left the place in a shameful state, and we never heard or saw more of them.

I felt the week in the bay rather dull on the whole, and was not sorry to go home to bush-life again. With the help of my husband's arm and patience, I contrived to walk to church on Sunday. A few people called upon me in my fine house, and I received them in a handsome new dark silk dress. I looked at the bare walls and floors, the wooden table in the midst without cover, and thought "what does it signify?" We made our bedroom very comfortable, and Mrs. Orchard did all the domestic work willingly and well. Many of the military and Maritzberg gentry came down for the ball, to do all honour to the Royal Durban Rangers. The colonel of the 45th Regiment sent his band to charm our feet as well as our ears; and such was the competition among the musicians that Colonel Cooper said they might all go, or nearly so, and we had a brilliant display with orchestra of near thirty performers. The ball was held in a very large store, lent for the occasion—the supper, a standing one, in an adjoining store, decorated with evergreens and the graceful palm-leaf and flags. The ladies were many of them well and becomingly dressed. There were scarcely partners enough for all the gentlemen, and I told some of the married men that it was not right for them to go round the room and engage the young ladies for the whole night, without giving the strangers and bachelors a chance.

They could have found more ladies for the ball, but I must let you into the secret. Some of the Durban ladies took it into their heads that, as the corps consists of various degrees, from gentlemen downwards, the invitations would be very wide, and a few of those who were

not quite sure of their standing, but wished to be tiptop, had the imprudence to give expression to their fears; one even said "she would not go, because there would be so many low people." The corps took fire at this, and in order to make the visitors select and all right, a committee of invitation was formed, and the guests were voted for or rejected. I was told in the ball-room (for I knew nothing of what had been going on) that some of the rejected ladies could have "bitten their fingers with vexation." The names of the lady patronesses should have been guarantee for any little Mrs. Grundy among them, who was cleaning her uncle's windows a short time ago before she married.

As a matron I wore my black velvet dress and gorgeous India shawl, and my cherry head-dress, as beautiful as ever, with the lace lappets at the back. Mrs. Milner never looked so well as in a new dark flounced silk (from the Cape, I imagine), which suited her figure exactly. I said to her, "Your dress is *very* pretty." She whispered back, "I can more than return the compliment." So as my indulgent husband thought me, I do believe, far away the best-dressed and best-looking lady present (which was all right), I satisfy myself that the old velvet did its duty well. I sewed in a full frill of lace round the neck, which helped to hide my bones. Mrs. Mellor wore a beautiful figured pink satin. I should add that only the heads of departments were invited beyond the corps and their families. There were a good many magistrates and ladies from various departments. Mr. and Mrs. Fynn from the Uncomaas I saw there, the pleasant couple who chanced to be at our house the night I was taken ill. I walked through the two first quadrilles by way of beginning, the colonel and the captain *vis-à-vis* with Mrs. Milner and myself. Her husband was chosen first lieutenant of the corps from his well-known skill in field sports.

The day of the ball the colonel, i.e. the Lieutenant-Governor, reviewed the corps. Everybody went, of course. I did not think of going, for my husband was using old Fox. However, two kind gentlemen insisted,

the one (Captain Proudfoot) on sending a steady pony, and the other (Dr. Kelly) on escorting me. So I went, and was all the better for the little ride. The gentlemen went through their exercises beautifully.

Mr. Arthur Eastwood came down from his farm for the gaieties, and joined us on the course; Dr. Cunninghame also, and a good many more. In order to make a little amusement for the many visitors, the Rangers got up some races among themselves, and my husband at the last moment entered old Fox for a hurdle race. He had never leapt him before. The spirit of the day was upon him, and much as I dread a hurdle race, there was no use opposing, so having been assured that the hurdles would be made so that those who could not go over should go through, I put a good face on the matter, and actually helped to make a jockey of my husband, abusing and laughing at him all the time. I sewed a pair of red sleeves into one of his white jean jackets, and helped to tie a red sash round his waist, and let him have his day of play without let or hindrance. He got a tumble on the sand, but no hurt fortunately, and old Fox might have won the race but for the last hurdle, which he refused altogether. As Leyland is no race-goer, I have no fears for further such adventures, but the exercise of that week laid him up for some days. The spirit got the better of the body, and while it lasted could not take it in moderation.

We contrived to entertain several gentlemen at dinner while in the bay, chiefly strangers come down for the week. Dr. Kelly was a good deal with us. He is magistrate in a very lonely district, and says his wife would like much to go to England again. Mr. Collins dined with us the last Sunday we were in town, and just as we were preparing for dinner Mr. Miller, from Isipingo, came to the door, and said, "I say, Feilden, can you give me a dinner, for I've got none?" So Leyland came in laughing to tell me of the request. We were very well off, luckily, having a leg of roasted pork. When I joked him about the lady in whose house he was visiting having turned him out, he told us they were

all gone to a christening, and he had told them he should forage for himself.

I cannot say that every one at the ball was tiptop, for my husband laid his scarlet fez down on a seat for a few minutes, and it entirely disappeared. He has advertised for it as lost, but it looks a little worse than that. He will probably get it back, as it is easily identified. Leyland is much vexed at the loss. He treasured it at home, and whenever he felt poorlyish or toothachy he would ask me to get "Mary's cap" for him. He never put it on without an air of satisfaction, and I really think it did him more good than another would have done.

How lovely our ride into Durban was. The bush-path was more than usually beautiful with its fresh foliage, and light and shade; but the crowning beauty was the great tall shrubs laden with clustering white bells that scented the air deliciously. A few days of storm followed, and on our return home not a white bell was to be seen. The name of this glorious shrub I have since learned is gardenia. Our papaw trees are a perfect show this year, the stems are clustered round with fruit as large as one's head, while these again are sheltered by a grand umbrella of handsome leaves. I find very few people like the papaw fruit, while some prefer it to pine-apple. You can eat more of it without receiving any harm. Leyland will cut one in two, place one half on my plate, the other on his own; with sugar, and with the squeeze of a lime or lemon they are very refreshing and pleasant. We often divide one between us in a forenoon for luncheon. Occasionally we enjoy a basin full of cocoa, or of home-grown and made arrowroot. Milk is so scarce that we have learned to drink coffee and tea without, and begin rather to prefer it so!

We are busy watching and feeding silkworms. The mulberry tree thrives well, and those planted last year are growing nicely. Leyland had some silkworm eggs given him which keep coming into worms, and now several are spinning. It is a pastime just now, but they require constant attention to supply with fresh leaves. I

should be inclined to try the worms on the trees and let them cater for themselves, but I suppose that will not do.

October 20th.—We have very changeable weather just now, one day burning hot with a cool wind, the next a pouring wet, cold, disagreeable day, dismal without and within, yet making the trees from the window look most beautiful in their fresh green leaves. To-day is such a day of rain and cold, and we enjoy a good fire in Margaret's grate. My husband, with the Caffres, is making arrowroot under the verandah, and now he is washing what has been grated in the house. We hoped to have had enough to send to our two dear mothers a good canister full each, by way of first-fruits; but, just when the root became ripe, the Caffres deserted to their craals, and we could get no help, so the roots began to sprout and my husband has had to plant them all out again, for so much the larger quantity next year we shall hope. He saved a large basket full for home use, which is what he is now making. Mr. Miller told me he had made three tons this year from three acres! I think there must have been more acres.

Mr. Miller has been better situated for Caffres than we, but now we have got six Zulu refugees bound for three years, so we hope to be better off in working times. This farm would soon pay if the wild animals would leave us alone, but the very beauty of the place is its bane: the bush hides so many beasts.

A. K. used to have a sort of fever to try colonial life. If what I have told him at various times has not cooled his ardour, what would he say to coming to visit us, and learn for himself what a colonial life is in practice? Young men often like it well, but I doubt if it would suit A. He has been brought up too comfortably, and is so particular about little nicenesses and cleanlinesses. These are utterly disregarded here. Many young men go so far as to despise the use of sheets, and roll themselves in a kaross or blanket on the floor or bed, as it may chance, and live in anything but comfort. While we were in the bay lately, a gentleman coming to us

from bachelor's apartments, described their manner of living as "piggish," and was glad to come and take his dinner with us. Now if A. were bent on trying a colony (I do not say I advise it) he might, by coming to us as a visitor, get a good insight into the life and *company* he would have to deal with, and at the same time, by resolving to be only a looker-on, he would escape the many snares and pitfalls that are laid in the path of all unwary beginners, and he would have our experience of the many tricks which are played with equal vigour and zest in Australia, or by brother Jonathan, or here in Natal. Men who live by their wits grow very cunning to take in the new comer; and he gets entangled in a net, that only twists him in the tighter the more he tries to get out. By coming as a visitor he would see the resources of a colony, and what the chance of making money (*and its cost!*) without having to tie himself down for life. If we were beginning now, and could undo what our inexperience set afloat (aided by sharpers), we could live both very pleasantly and comfortably, though the manner of life requires a suitable style of character. I do not dislike the life when I am well, but there are sundry difficulties in providing for a house, which make it fall rather hard upon the lady, if she would have her house comfortably provided and clean. If I were as strong and active as I was till lately, I would just as soon manage for myself with Caffres and Alec Smith, and be without a female servant at all. I should have my house and furniture a great deal nicer and cleaner, as I find was the case; but we are obliged to submit with a good grace, or we should soon be left to manage for ourselves. And oh! that Caffre is not easy to teach; you must stand, and watch, and show, and *insist*. A white servant will not be at the trouble, and so plates are badly washed, pans left dirty, kitchen in a mess, our boots uncleaned, and all because the mistress is not on the spot to see for herself that things are done. Men have more need of wives in a place like this, a young untutored colony, than in civilized England. One thing or other has given Natal a bad name, and instead

of it rising rapidly, immigrants have almost ceased, and the golden land of Australia has seduced many away, who, we are told, would gladly come back if they could. Thus it will be some time before the resources of Natal can develop themselves. Coal of good quality is found in the country, and Dr. Kelly, a geologist, thinks that and sugar will save the colony; but before coal can be made available, roads must be made to bring it to the port, and the British Government must become aware of the greater advantage of Natal as a coaling and calling station over the Cape.

I imagine that before the Bay of Durban can be made really useful for ships of large size, the entrance must be considerably deeper over the bar. That is constantly improving by the works that are carried out on a small scale; but, owing to the great poverty of the funds, the progress is slow. If coal should be thought worth working for the steam communication with India, the bar would very soon be improved, and Natal is said to be equally convenient with the Cape as a port, as it does not take vessels more out of their track. This would soon make Natal rise in the scale of colonies; meantime it is plodding its way on to notice otherwise. My husband has sixty acres planted with sugar-cane. The little sugar that has as yet been manufactured in Natal is of superior quality, and it is thought would obtain a preferent market. Mr. Morewood's sugar was the first that was made.

November 6th.—Letters from home to-day have set my head in a whirl, awakening such a host of reminiscences that I have not time even to *wonder* if my husband will return to-night. He has been absent a whole week to-day, and they tell me I must not expect him home till Wednesday at sunset (this is Monday), for Mr. Miller met him with his face towards the Tugela river, in company with two other gentlemen, and he thinks he will have been led on with them to Mr. Walmsley's station on the Nonoti, in search of Caffres and mealies to feed them with. He set out to go to the Tongaat, but I suppose has not been success-

ful there in his search, and has gone on. There is the mischief in a country like this! No telegraphs, no roads, and one's husband may be drowned in crossing a river, lost, or half starved, or thrown from his horse and killed. In short, if I were of a fidgety disposition there would be no end to my excitements and troubles. But while I never can resist the fear and thoughts of the chance of an accident, I quietly go on eating, sleeping, working, and resting, and *he always turns up again.* When I am kept long expecting, a song in the Freischutz to that effect goes on humming continually in my head. Except a night and a day of terrific thunderstorm, my husband has had fine weather for his journey, and brilliant moonlight.

I must tell you how a man equips himself for such a journey: a rough coat, not too heavy, breeches and long boots up the leg, spurs, and whip; a lucifer-match box, and a few shillings in his pocket, and a cigar in his mouth. If he gets drenched and mudded, and arrives at any decent quarters, he borrows a pair of socks, trousers, and a clean shirt, and either leaves his own, or gets them dried or washed as he can, and that serves him. No portmanteau, no purse, not even a clean pair of socks in his pocket! He must ride as light as possible. Mr. Miller borrowed from Leyland when here some time ago. I sent his things to the wash, and when I saw him in Durban, at the time of the ball, I told him he should have his own back when he brought my husband's, not before! He brought them himself the very next morning.

I have been obliged to work a little more myself lately. It has been lucky Leyland was away. The very day he set out, at five a.m., my servant, Mrs. Orchard, became ill, really ill, and as Alec was required at the plough, I was glad to have as little done in the way of cooking or cleaning as possible. The Caffre cleans knives and pans, but requires directing; and just picture my horror on finding he had discovered how bright he could make the knives on the knife board, and had tried the same process on some of our plated forks! We (i.e.

Alec and myself) dined off cold beef for a week, boiling a little rice, or sweet potatoes, or French beans. I got arrowroot at any time, and took or sent some up to the cottage for poor Mrs. Orchard, who was not able to do a thing for herself for a week. She crawled down here to-day, and will soon be well, I hope. She has had a serious illness, attended with fever and an inflamed breast. I recollected Rachel's receipt of the cabbage leaf, which I got for her, and she found it very efficacious. She has a little sister who looks after the children; they are nice children, and so are Mrs. Galliers' two. Little Billy Galliers comes to me to say his letters every day. I tried him six months ago, but he was too young. However, it has done him good, for he is now learning amazingly fast. He is four and a half years, and can already say all his letters. To-day he began with words of two letters, some of which his ear caught aright without my telling its name: "go" was one. Little Emily Orchard is a funny child and amuses me. When I don't want her, I take no notice of her, and she soon runs away; she thinks everything "so beautiful" here.

CHAPTER XIX.

November 6th.—I have ridden to Mrs. Bowen's to-day, and found my old friend *au désespoir* at receiving only three *John Bull* newspapers and no letters by this mail. I soon cheered her up, and after chatting awhile rode back again with a bunch of mulberry leaves for the silkworms, and a few mulberries for myself. There are about 400 worms, and they eat, eat, all day long. About 100 have now spun their cocoons. It is a hobby. Our trees are very young, and Mrs. Bowen helped us with leaves, giving our trees a few hours' rest every now and then.

I think this will be the place to introduce another of my old friend's notes, written after one of my rides to her cottage lately.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—

"I was very anxious to hear how you bore the ride yesterday, and that you reached home before the increasing gales made it disagreeable. That little glimpse of your dear face only made me wish for a longer visit, yet I was thankful for that, all things considered. I need not tell you how the wind became more and more unmanageable, nor describe the sea-like motion of my poor cottage! It was an awful night, and I heard the *voice* as it hooted, or skried, or grumbled around me, and felt quite sure it was not all talk; but I was not afraid. The Lord does and will protect me, as well as provide for me! No evil thing can go beyond His appointment, not so much even as a cane or a rush. I do not say that we shall not suffer from them, nor that we are forbid to think them trials, ofttimes hard to

be borne; but they do not spring from the ground—'tis the hand of a reconciled God and Father, and all will be for our ultimate good.

"You will, I know, wish for a little egotism, so I will indulge that very natural propensity and tell you that 'I am not Stephano but a Cramp.' My poor old bones are on the rack. I was compelled more than once last night to get out of bed to induce my stiff and crumpled-up legs to return to a more comfortable and straightforward shape; and this morning I found such an accumulation of dust and sand on all about me—self included—that more water was needful, and more exertion necessary than was at all suited to my weakness. I did venture out after breakfast to see with my own eyes what havoc might be the result of all this turmoil, and was most thankful to find it less than I expected; but the wind was too strong for me, and nearly prostrated me once or twice, so I was obliged to come in again. I am always better for the fresh air, and the sun does invite me this morning, but what must be done when you can't stand?

"I am tempted to send you a few carrots and mulberries; the last, indeed, are pitiable, being the gift of the wind, who refuses to allow them to remain till ripe. You thought my rice-pudding eatable, and therefore, having a little milk, I venture to send you one. I have a fire in my stove to-day, for the first time for fourteen days; weather saying no, no! Floyd has just been to say the pudding is ready, so I must not let it get cold, and you will receive it at your midday meal. I pray for you, my dear friend, for I have learned to love you, and I beg you to feel that I am yours affectionately, "MILESINA BOWEN."

In a previous note, alluding to outward storms, she followed up by hoping she had bid adieu to storms of temper for a long time. Poor old lady! she bewails her temperament, but cannot yield. I believe she must battle on to the end, though she told me to-day she does not fret now as she used to do, and that she used to be very fidgety. I can well believe it. She was

speaking of the comfort the Psalms of David have been to her; and, though she has read some of them almost daily for sixty years, they ever come afresh with fuller and deeper meaning to comfort the drooping heart. David's whole career is so romantic, stirring, and instructive, that I am astonished it is not more generally searched into, instead of being read in disjointed chapters.

I have only just dined, and it is past seven o'clock! Why so late? Convenience, I reply, and it may be called supper. Alec gets his dinner at twelve or one, and this week he has prepared the chief of the late dinner after his day's work. I tell him to come in earlier, but he gets busy, and I am not yet strong enough to cook for myself. To-day I had soup, cold beef, rice, fried banana, and a cold papaw tart—rather tasteless for want of some lemon syrup, which has come to an end. Alec waits, in a way, with often a dirty face, which has had many a rub from his hand during the hot sunny hours of labour. Just now he is writing his copy beside me.

My English friends think me very courageous to sleep in the house alone, but I do feel Alec a protection, though I know he would sleep through any and everything. The other morning I was awakened with a tremendous rapping, as I thought, at my door. Supposing it to be my husband's whip-handle, I jumped up and called, "Wait a bit, I'll come in a moment;" but seeing no one through the window, I concluded Orchard must have come to beg I would go to his wife, while he should go for the doctor (her pulse had been very high for two days). I donned my dressing-gown and slippers, went out, and looked everywhere about, but all was quiet, and Alec sound asleep in his bed upstairs. I persuaded myself it was a dream. After breakfast I sent Alec to look if a tiger could have sprung over some boards outside at my bed-head and knocked something down; but no, all was right there. Presently he came to me, saying he had been searching through the attic-room, and that the cat had upset a plate of arrow-

root, which had fallen on the floor above my head. The plate was not broken, but must have vibrated in falling, and made the noise, which I heard more vividly in sleep than I should have done awake.

I have been drying arrowroot during my husband's absence—that which he made. The weather was then unfavourable for the drying process ; it goes out in the hot sun on clean cloths. Wind blows dust and sand into it, rain or damp of course wets it, so a warm, mild day has to be chosen, and we half feared its moulding or turning sour before a right day should come. We shall have plenty for home consumption this year, but none to sell or send home, owing to those tiresome Caffres leaving work. I have also been trying to dry bananas ; and what with feeding and tending the silkworms, and my sewing and reading, I have plenty of occupation for the day and never think of wearying.

November 9th.—My husband is home again ; he came in drenched with rain, in borrowed clothes, wringing the wet out of his hair on to the floor. He has been quite unsuccessful in his search after both Caffres and mealies ; the latter are not to be had except at such a price as to forbid sending for them, the roads are so bad they would kill the oxen. The nearer Caffres will not sell their mealies at all, growing just sufficient for their own use, and they do not care to make more money than they require for their own purposes by planting to sell as well as use. I suppose we shall have to feed our Caffres on rice at four times the cost of mealies when we came to the colony two years ago. My husband was nearly starved on his journey. One day all he had to eat was a handful of mealies out of the Caffre pot. Mr. White and Mr. McLean fared the same. Mr. Grout, the American missionary, was very kind and hospitable, and so was Mr. Tarbottle, with his six or seven children ill with measles, and only two rooms in his house ! A gentleman who has been most hospitably and kindly received in our house gave him a most extraordinary reception, and offered him nothing to eat. My husband came home very tired with his long ride

and meagre fare, but says the little "out" has done him good.

December 9th.—The Royal Durban Rangers have been called out to aid in quelling some unruly Caffres who have been stealing their neighbours' cattle from everywhere around them, and who refuse to pay the hut tax. No man's cattle are safe from their depredations, so that dark and light are willing to join the Governor in repelling and punishing them. The Governor is on the spot already with what few troops he had at hand, and the Rangers set out on their hundred miles' ride immediately. I feel a little bit like a soldier's wife when the husband sets off to the wars, for what may not happen in a wild country like this? The scene of the disturbance is on the Uncomas.

December 23rd.—I have got my husband home again, sound in limb though tired in body, after having been eighteen hours in the saddle yesterday, riding all the way from Richmond. While trying to sleep, the barricades against my bedroom door (which I had not locked) fell with a loud noise. "Who's there?" I called, jumping out of bed hastily, as I saw a dark shadow about the handle of the door. "Is that you, Leyland?" and in a moment more I felt the sleeve of his rough coat. The rebel chief, Dushani, has wisely yielded and sent in 11,000 head of cattle, so the Governor's party are returning. My husband and Mr. Proudfoot have outridden the rest. They crossed the Uncomas on a raft of bullocks' hides of their own contriving. The boat that was sent for their crossing, and my note with it, had not arrived when they left, and the river was greatly swollen, carrying away the first raft they made. The sun's power has been very great; one gentleman or more has had a sunstroke, and my husband has not wholly escaped. Mr. Fell had a fall, in which he narrowly escaped a more serious injury from his hunting-knife running into his ribs. The commando were all bent on doing their duty, and cheerfully underwent the disagreeables of sleeping on the ground the whole fortnight, often under a pouring rain. My hus-

band put sticks in the ground, fastened a horse-cloth over them and crept in under, thus making himself tolerably comfortable, but he lived in wet clothes nearly the whole time. His face is much burnt, with his nose red and swollen, and the skin off from the effects of the sun and air, heat and cold. He was very thankful to get home, and taking hold of a sheet, asked what those things were called, for he had almost forgotten them!

December 29th.—I had expected to eat my Christmas dinner alone, though we had kept some of Lady Feilden's mince-meat on purpose for that day; and knowing what a treat it would be to the little Smiths to spend the day here, I wrote to ask Mrs. Smith to come with them all, which she did, and believing me quite alone, she brought them all over on Saturday evening in the cart, a distance of eight miles, and a quantity of good things to provide for so large a party for a day or two, knowing she should take me by surprise. She brought a fine live turkey, a couple of fowls, some eggs, two loaves, &c., &c. She was greatly surprised to find my husband had returned, and told me that when she heard of his going on the commando, she trembled so, that Orchard, who carried the news, told her she was a coward, and had not half the courage of Mrs. Feilden, who did not "take on so," though he was her husband. I was very glad to see him safe back, however. Next day afternoon, after a good rest, he rode into Durban to return a borrowed hack, and bring home his tired horses which he had left there, and on his return he told me he had accepted an invitation for me and himself for Christmas Day, which Mrs. Miller had renewed on finding the Rangers home again,—her husband is one of the corps. He sent his wagon and team of oxen to take us to their new house near Springfield, where his mill and our sugar-canes are, so there was no excuse. I put up a nice dress, and got into the wagon, which my husband had stuffed with cushions for me. He took his cornopæan to amuse us on our road, and his shoulders formed a prop for me in the heavier jolts of the vehicle. It was my first ride in a

wagon. The yelling of the drivers. the loud crack of the whip, the bustle of constantly jumping up and down and shouting, gave me a good idea of the fatigue of driving a team of oxen. Often we were quite nervous lest a large branch of tree in the bush-path should catch the lofty, white, light cover of our conveyance and carry it clean away. But we arrived all safe, and Mr. and Mrs. Miller were delighted to see us. We took a blanket and sheets with us and pillows, and slept on a mattress on the floor, for their furniture is still up the coast. The Umgeni river has been so long swollen they cannot get a wagon across, so they have only bare necessaries in their house as yet. The bridge of boats was carried away, and the river one day rose more than a foot an hour. Our hosts were very pleasant, and we returned home the day after Christmas Day, having left Mrs. Smith in charge to superintend the party at home ; and a merry day they had. There were Mrs. Smith and her family (Smith declining to leave his post in the absence of all others), the Orchards and three children, Orchard's brother and his wife's brother, old Gudgeon, who all work on the sugar plantation, and Mrs. Galliers and her two children. They cooked their dinner among themselves. It consisted of beef, veal, a plum-pudding, a couple of fowls, and some bacon. They were very merry, singing and romping, and drinking healths in our dining-room, for the day turned out wet, and when they had finished they scoured the room out and left everything in beautiful order. We made Mrs. Smith remain a few days longer, and send home the boys to take care of the house for their father and the others. Poor old Gudgeon started off to return to Springfield, but when half-way through the bush, he sent Alec on alone, saying he should die if he went, so back he came, and next day he set out to consult Dr. Holland, feeling poorly after his Christmas dinner.

Since Christmas Day my husband has had rather a bad fall, his horse getting his feet into some kind of bog hole while galloping. He came in all besmeared with black mud and his eye swollen, his cap was buried

in the bog and could not be found at all. He has felt quite shaken and poorly since. There is another and more serious invalid at the farm. A man in my husband's employ got three of his ribs crushed, and has come out to the country for change of air with his family. I went over to see him, and found he is really very much hurt.

The year 1854 did not close without another trouble. The beautiful pony Mr. Kock lent me to ride remained after I no longer wanted it, to eat grass. It was in fine condition—fat and shining. One day it went down to the valley, when a snake bit it so venomously that the Caffre could scarcely get it home to our stable; we could see no mark, but could only suppose it a snake-bite. My husband rode off for its owner as fast as he could, and they were back in an hour and forty minutes with an antidote to poison, but the pony was dead. We did not know there were such poisonous snakes so near us, and imagine the pony must have trodden on it in the grass, and that the snake stung it in self-defence. We were very much distressed, and felt the more that it happened in our grounds. It is the second horse its master lost within a few months, and was a great beauty.

CHAPTER XX.

BEFORE finishing my notes for the year 1854, I must make a few extracts from the letters of my dear old neighbour and friend, which became ever more friendly and intimate, and were always interesting on their own account, as well as for the sake of the aged writer.

"*December 8th.*—MY DEAR MRS. FEILDEN,—Man is born to trouble; who dare gainsay it? Alas! neither of us, I am sure! I grieve for the manner of the poor pony's death, and do indeed enter into your complicated feelings about it. I return your papers with thanks. I am ill, my dear friend—too ill even to read. Yesterday I suffered so much that when my servant went to town for absolute necessaries, I bid him call on Mrs. Galliers to come and help me a little. She did not come. I sat full three hours near the door on a stool, without moving hand or foot, leaning against the wall with my half-shut eyes; then, by way of change, stretched my feeble limbs on the sofa for another hour. George was away six hours—they were the longest I have known for many a year. No comfort when he did come; yet I am very glad to have him; he tries to be here about seven. I cannot lie in bed beyond half-past five, and, unluckily, I have taken a dislike to coffee, which used to be ready at hand—and I am half famished in the midst of plenty! Oh! may I be forgiven for this unthankfulness!

"Floyd left me without notice—even entirely unknown and unexpectedly—but this is not the worst. I told you of a man with a most sinister countenance coming to me on Monday, saying Floyd had sent him to come in his room, for he was going! I had no

reason to believe this, and told the man so. When Floyd returned he said he had not sent any one, and had not seen any man on the road. I have too strong cause to believe the man was with Floyd all night, carrying away his tables, benches, and every rag belonging to him. After breakfast he cut down three banana trunks with the assistance of the Caffre, and when I sent George to look for him, he was gone, leaving an empty and very dirty house. I heard a noise at my window on Monday night, something between a grunt and a note of exultation or intimidation. I thought little about it then ; but, being so unwell and feeble, and very busy (I had not been in my bijou garden until this morning), when passing to my storeroom, I thought I saw more than I wished. Too true ! oh dear ! The pride of my garden, the delight of my eyes, broken, disfigured, spoiled! My Brazilian pine almost stripped of the lower branches, and shaken even to the stem. This mischief cannot have been caused by winds, for the tree is better sheltered than any other, and no mischief is done elsewhere. It is the malice of Floyd, but not his work, he is too cunning for that. My firm belief is that he brought this gaol-bird for the very purpose. I fancy a long residence in gaol does not improve the morals. He has induced the Caffre, Jacob, to leave, calling him his servant, though I paid 15*s.* a month. I tried to persuade him to stay, for he knew a little English ; is quiet, handy, and industrious. I never liked a Caffre before, but if I could have kept this one, I could have got on for a short time at least.

"The mail has come in, and no letter for me ! Oh, my poor heart is sick and sore, though I do struggle against such faithlessness, and pray often and most fervently for help. I believe the cords of my tent are being loosened, and that I shall be permitted to begin my homeward, upward journey ere long ! I fear, my dear friend, you will wish I had buried these gloomy thoughts in my own breast, and not added a sombre tinge to your meditations. Perhaps the weather has its influence, but I think not. Circumstances undoubtedly have their share,

but these will pass away like the morning dew, and if I could have written more cheerfully I would. The Natal paper says the steamer now expected is the last; nothing is said of future mails!—poor Natal! thy case is as hopeless as my own; but the tide may turn. The tide of my love never turns, not even twice a year; therefore, as in duty bound, tell me everything concerning your health and comfort, and all events current.

"With all that is affectionate, from yours sincerely,

"M. BOWEN."

"*December 13th.*—MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was extremely sorry to be quite unable to answer your note yesterday. I was indeed very ill, as I am now, and do not expect to be better. I was up at five and busy till eleven, when a lady came to spend the day. I have only George to help; he is willing, but slow—at least to my impatient temper. I lamented the loss of the pony on your account, and I can fully understand your anxieties when military costume is assumed, and warlike movements are commenced. Yet from all I can hear or read of it, there is indeed a probability that there will be 'more fun than fighting,' as your husband says. God grant it! Nevertheless, the times are not in our hands, and we can only cast our anchor on the Rock of Ages.

"I thank you for the sympathy expressed about my Brazilian beauty, but I have to tell a sorer trial! My two pretty little kittens, about two months old, of course were very amusing; but the mother thought it her duty to show them the world, and was always on the watch to tempt them away from my parlour (their sole domicile). From my being engaged she succeeded yesterday, and took them out of sight. I sent George with my visitor to see her safe home, and when they were starting, I asked him to catch my kittens, and bring them to me. He said he could not find them then, but had seen one playing round the house a few minutes before. This could not have been true. As soon as they were gone, I shouted 'Kitty, Kitty!' a cry they had just learned to know was good for them. The old cat came and looked at me, then went to the garden and came

back to me,—in short, all but spoke. I was excited by her unusual manner. I unlocked the gate, went to the top of the garden, and there saw my favourite Kitty in the coil of a young boa-constrictor! not a small one, for the middle was thicker than any part of my arm, and very beautiful; but all I could see of my pet was the head, which seemed to me to be a little flattened, and the two fore-feet moving and struggling. The old cat stood by my side, watching the awful creature; but he took no notice of us—he was busy with his prey. I felt so sick and stupefied that a few minutes passed before I thought of waving my white flag—a signal agreed upon by the family at Prospect when I wanted help. I rung my bell, and raised a 'Swiss maiden's' shout in vain. I was sure George could not be far off, and might return to fire my pistol; but I find this morning that they met the Caffre who was sent for the lady visitor at the foot of the hill, and George followed his own devices. I continued waving my flag for an hour. It was not seen, I suppose, for no help came to me. I sat up till ten last night writing, could not quite finish, so got up again at five and concluded a long letter to Carmarthen to be ready for the mail. Believe all that is kind and tenderly affectionate fills my forlorn heart towards you, my dear, kind friend.—M. B."

As these letters show what a lady verging upon four-score years, of a refined and highly cultivated mind, may be called to go through in a colony, I shall copy a few more.

"*December 17th.*—MY DEAR FRIEND,—Please not to blame me for my long silence, for indeed it is a most unwilling fault. I have no one to send. I have not seen Mrs. Galliers since her very brief and ill-timed visit on Tuesday. On Thursday morning a little parcel was brought to me from Prospect requesting my assistance to forward it to Feniscowles. It was not in my power. George came on that day merely to go to town for provisions, and on his return there was evidently a storm fast approaching, and to avoid it he was in almost too great a hurry to boil my kettle for tea (dinner I had

none, and wished not for any). Although he is always civil and willing, he went before five, and I have not seen him since. I am indebted to the kindness of Mrs. Forrest for my breakfast and tea, i.e. she sends her Caffre with milk at six o'clock, and allows him to make a fire and boil my kettle. I must have it at that rather too early hour or not at all, as she cannot spare him later. He comes again at five or six p.m. for the same purpose, and this is all I can manage. I hope George will come on Monday, and also poor Mrs. G. She did not bring my clothes last week; no matter, there is a greater probability of her coming when I shall be in readiness.

"I congratulate you on the glorious result of the late warlike movements. I presume our noble Rangers will return to Durban with drums beating and flags flying, as well as a proper share of the spoils. I read in the *Natal Mercury* of last Wednesday that Dushani had sent 1000 head of cattle, and declared he did not wish to fight. So I fancy that what Mr. Feilden kindly said to allay your fears has proved correct, viz. 'more fun than fighting;' and now I trust you will soon enjoy the pleasure, comfort, and security of his society again.

"I have been pretty considerably tried lately, no doubt for my ultimate good, but it is by no means pleasant for the time. My poor tree! my pretty kittens! my runaway servants! All these are old stories, but I have a little matter to add thereto. Part of the old fence of my bijou garden was laid level with the ground early on Friday morning, whether from the storm or the boa, I do not know, but it is the same spot where I beheld him feasting. Somehow I do not feel comfortable to do anything there, until I get a little clearance and repairs done, and when will that be? My unfortunate roof gives me constant evidence of what unprincipled men are capable of, there is scarce a yard waterproof, and again I exist in a draw-well. I must be made of parchment to endure it, but I am not much worse than usual. This I in part attribute to being obliged to work hard, sweeping, dusting, making bed, and feeding poultry, all very delicate employments and very intellectual, but

good for me for all that. As to having even a hope of obtaining a good servant—alas! alas!

"Saturday morning a man made his appearance with a bit of paper in his hand. It ran thus: 'The bearer is looking for work; I do not know him.' He strutted into the parlour, and I made him go out before I would take the paper or hear him—a barbarian, with paws like a bear, constantly in motion; a shirt as black as a coal, and upon inquiry I found he had no other or change of any kind. 'And will no one speak for you?' I asked. 'I have been robbed of my wages and my clothes.' He did not know where to go, and had no money to buy food. I gave him a shilling to prevent starvation, and told him if he would come decently clean on Monday I would talk to him, but not as he was. My gentleman then seemed quite at home, asked who that house belonged to, was it a large one, &c., &c. 'It does not concern you,' I said sternly. 'Have you a good garden? I should like to see it.' 'You have had your answer. Go now, and do not be troublesome.' But I had to show him the way. This is the only offer at present. I have no thought of taking him, dirty, vulgar, and idle, I imagine. I am better without, bad as it is. George is not to be depended on for long; he will be wanted on their farm, and he is but a poor help after all. He comes at eight, once or twice at seven, and goes home at five. Many hours of utter loneliness remain, and, though I do not *fear*, it is scarcely safe. Witness my poor little kittens and the boa, so very close to the house. . . . Ever sincerely and affectionately yours, M. BOWEN.

"PS.—*Monday.*—George came this morning, and Mrs. Galliers is now making herself useful. I need it, for I am ill, up before five and at work till ten. The air is sultry; ants, white and black, devouring without mercy—my sugar-basin with a lid full of the little ones; and real centipedes, small but venomous, coming to my feet. Oh! what a country for people to live in! Is it not some excuse for writing on a Sabbath, to say that I was up at half-past five, and, except a few words to the Caffre at six, had not spoken a word to any one? I read

for hours, sun and wind not allowing me to walk about. It was a long day."

"*December 22nd.*—MY DEAR FRIEND,—'There is a tide in the affairs of man,' so it is said. I wish the tide of mine would turn, for verily it runs all one way, and that wofully rough against me. But I have often in days long past strolled on some pebbly shore, and picked up stones rounded and polished by the rude tossings they had received, and as I recall those hours of comparative enjoyment, I think it advisable to believe that all my untoward and unwelcome joltings are intended to effect a similar improvement, and that in due time, if I faint not, I shall be so polished, moulded, and prepared as to be decidedly fitter for a more exalted station. Amen. You will perceive I do not attribute any merit in the work to myself. Oh, no! All I feel able to do is, not to struggle against it.

. . . . . .

"Last Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, I had ample time and space for meditation, being lone—lonely!—from morning till day-spring, again and again. Thursday, George came, but was all day in town; to-day here, to-morrow in town again, more for himself than me; but he reminded me that next Monday will be Christmas Day, and it would be useless to send, as I did intend. Of course, he will not come Sunday or Monday, so if solitude hath charms, I am quite a privileged person—possibly, a trifle too much so—but, at least, I can think of my friends. I can sincerely and heartily wish for yourself and Mr. Feilden 'A merry Christmas and a happy New Year.' I give these salutations after the fashion of the good old times; but I cannot help feeling these good things are less attainable here than elsewhere, even where our thoughts wander to with many a longing, lingering sigh. Still, I do wish that you may enjoy all that this *wild* world can give—and as an essential, that the noble Ranger is returned, safe and well with due honours, and a little booty into the bargain; but I fear 'Nunky takes all.'—Affectionately yours,

"M. BOWEN."

"*December 29th.*—MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am very glad to learn that you are returned quite safe, and I hope even the better for your visit, notwithstanding the roughness of your vehicle and road. What would your good friends in Lancashire think if they could see you thus seated in all your glory—not exactly—but eminence, certainly? Well, Queen Victoria would not mind roughing it a little; at least, she did not on her first visit to Scotland, so we may well be satisfied. *My* Christmas Day was such as I never passed before, and hope never shall again. I was up at five, to be ready for the milk, as the boy was to light my fire. At seven, young James Forrest brought it, and boiled my kettle; but was going to spend the day in town, and could not come in the evening. No Caffres at home, so I spent the long, long day without seeing or speaking to a human being. I did boil one egg, and, thanks to your kindness, had in addition a small bit of cheese, eating with it a slice of pine and bread, by which means my mouth escaped blisters. I read a little, wrote a little, walked a little (too wet), and went to bed a little before my usual hour, thinking my pillow tolerable company. Is not that a merry Christmas? Very unlike the party you so generously treated. Poor Mrs. Galliers is not a little proud of being one of the recipients; she is waiting impatiently now. The man I named arrived from Isipingo at five yesterday, crossing the two rivers with difficulty and danger, with his cart and six oxen. He did not stop here last night, having business in town. I am now expecting him, whether for good or evil I know not; but I am not over sanguine. He left me, after a service of nine weeks, to commence farming; he had been a useful servant. I am tired rather, and low, and hurried, so excuse me. Much love from yours sincerely,

"M. BOWEN."

CHAPTER XXI.

1855.—My husband's fall, added to all the exertions and hardships endured under the commando, proved more serious than we at first anticipated. Six weeks was he laid up, and so ill that I began to fear for his life. We feared low fever, for he had all the premonitory symptoms, and could scarcely crawl to the sofa for some time. A gentleman who called to see him said he looked ten years older in that short time. The worst of it was that I got a serious, though short, illness myself, and my husband would not let me try to use the feet which had so little power in them, but would crawl across the room to get things for me. Fortunately, Mrs. Orchard made herself very useful and handy. Our friend, Mr. Kock, was kind, riding out to see us. He brought some snipes one day, and Mrs. Bowen sent fruits and kind words to cheer us. Our doctor advised change of air and scene for both of us, so my husband wrote to Richmond, to a man he knew there, to see if any kind of shelter could be procured for us, in which case we would make a wagon journey, and stay a couple of months in that country.

The poor man who was hurt, and came to the farm for country air, could not rest, and he returned to Durban just to die. He had been terribly crushed; three of his ribs were broken, and this was not at first discovered. He could eat nothing latterly but pine-apples, which were beginning to ripen in our garden plentifully, so he got one every day.

On the 3rd of February my husband rode over to call on our old, kind neighbour, but returned quite exhausted. We read the nice books she sent to amuse our long days.

Stilling's "Life" was one. In writing to her, I say: "I am fascinated with Stilling's 'Life.' But what a different tone of living and of religion it shows between the German and English characters! What unrepressed, untutored feelings the former display! We are taught in early childhood to check all sentimentalism and all extremes. These children of the mountains and the valleys are allowed to indulge in all the mental freaks of nature. I wonder which is best? What simple but pure affection they learn to show for the Saviour, while we seem too full of awe for pure love. Yet I have often heard German Christianity termed Rationalism, and even, so far as I have read, I feel inclined to think something is wanted; but that may be the result of my bringing up. I have often thought we might make religion more attractive and lovable to the capacities and feelings of children, and have often regretted the amount of fear early instilled into a child's mind. Again, I think that a greater degree of simplicity of life than the children of wealthy English parents are permitted to enjoy, would help to diminish the love of the world and its good things, which stands like a barricade before the entrance to heaven. I shall read of Stilling's feelings with caution, however, because I feel their fascination in some degree. But what a singular bringing up was his! forced into the thoughts of a man, while yet an infant, entire separation from childhood, and communion with the ideal and with nature's wonders! When I was in the Vorarlberg, I frequently heard of the manner in which students battled their way up. In travelling to and from the university, over the mountains, 'Alpine stock' in hand, they begged their night's lodging, and none refused them a meal.

"In the other book there is a beautiful description of mountain scenery, relating to places and scenes that were familiar to me years ago. They have awakened many pleasant and delightful associations in my mind. The home of one of my sisters lies near the country of Pfeffers and the Via Mala, while that of a cousin was on the borders of the lovely Lake of Zurich. With her I

ascended the Rigiberg, to see the glorious sunrise light up the peaks of a grand panorama of mountains; and with her I walked through a white vapoury cloud, Alpine stock in hand, down the mountain side, over above the lovely Lake of Lucerne; the passes of the St. Gothard, the Bernardin, and the Jura, looking down upon the Lake of Geneva and the glorious array of mountain scenery. One scene in the early part of the book, the description of a sea of vapour, recalled vividly our descent of the Apennines towards Bologna. The few words in my journal, descriptive of that moonlight and early-dawn drive, convey to my memory a lovely and wonderful picture, seen only under such circumstances. 'Cheever,' at page 22, describes such a scene, only he was ascending through it, while we descended into it; and I imagine our view must have been the grander of the two, until he 'looked down from above.'"

February 8th.—The awful struggle in the East is going on with much loss of life, and whether the great victory of the Alma will be followed up by the fall of Sebastopol remains to be seen. My husband never liked our alliance with infidel France and Mohammedan Turkey; but to have permitted Russia to quietly upset the "balance of power" would have been wrong. "The Beast," "Babylon," "the Harlot," would soon raise her head. She is to do so for a short time, but only to be overthrown entirely. Can that time be approaching?

"*February 16th.*—It seems long since we heard from you, my dear Mrs. Bowen, but this world is so full of business, even to the smallest of us. I have not liked to get out my embroidery for fear of neglecting other duties. The *Ken* is to sail for Mauritius between Monday and Wednesday; our letters must go by her, and trust to Providence for their further conveyance. An overland despatch yesterday brought news of the fall of Sebastopol. I trust the news is correct, for this prolonged siege and war are making sad havoc with brave men. What do you think of the nurses who are gone or going out, Miss Florence Nightingale at their head? She had previously shown her real Christian

spirit in nursing at the Governesses' Institution, when no one could be found to take the lead. But I fear for the hearts of the brave men these ladies go among. Perhaps the wounds there may prove more incurable than those of the body; however, these nurses were called for.

"We have been making some pine-apple jam, which has turned out well, so I send back your own bottle filled with some of it. We are going up to Richmond for a couple of months, as soon as we can get away."

February 14th.—We have this day heard of a small cottage up the country at Richmond, which we can have for two or three months for two pounds. We shall take all we may require of furniture in a wagon. The house we wanted is not finished; the man cannot get Caffres to work. The same complaint everywhere; with the country swarming with able-bodied Caffres, you can hardly get one to cut your wood, and draw your water. The want of labourers will ruin this country.

We had an excitement lately caused by one, a very good, *humble* (!) Caffre, anxious to do his work, and apparently fond of us. Gratitude is said to be a rare quality in a Caffre, but when my husband was so ill poor Umbobo wanted to give him two shillings of his wages! When I fainted in my sleep one night, Umbobo was sent off as soon as daylight appeared to bring the doctor. The poor fellow ran as hard as he could, and the doctor soon appeared. Next morning, again, Umbobo set off quite cheerily with a note to the doctor to fetch medicine. We waited and waited, but he never returned. At ten o'clock the doctor came, but Umbobo had not been to him. What could have become of him? I was sure a tiger must have taken him. Wild animals roam at nights and very early in the mornings; they will become uneasy at the approach of a Caffre (probably owing to the smell), while they show no repugnance to a white man. I saw this myself in two young lions in a cage belonging to our friend, Mr. Proudfoot. My husband thought that if a tiger had taken Umbobo, it must have been in mistake for a

buck as the poor fellow was springing through the bush-path. My husband made preparations for having the bush searched, because, as he wore a white shirt, it must have caught in the bushes if he had been dragged. He had also a note and stick; but hearing that some one had seen him near Durban, and that some Dutch wagons were in the bay, we thought he might have been re-captured by his old master. As poor Umbobo had left his clothes and money here, we could come to no other than one of these conclusions. Now a new light has been thrown on his disappearance. When Caffre Tom went to make inquiries for him, some one told him that Umbobo had asked a passenger where his note was directed, and was told "to the milungo (gentleman) next the Trunk," and Tom says he was made to believe that his master had sent him with a note to get himself put into the Trunk (or prison), to avoid which he had run off. This must have been done by some wag, and is provoking, and an aspersion on the character of the best master Umbobo ever had, and will tell ill among his people. But in clearing out the kitchen what should turn up, from behind a barrel, but some baby clothes, marked "Grundy," which it is supposed Umbobo had stolen off the grass, and conscience had made a coward of him. What could he mean to do with baby clothes? He had not even a wife. My husband took the clothes to Mrs. Grundy in Durban; she had missed them three months before. Poor Umbobo was so faithful with us, that we don't like to believe him the thief. We miss him much. When I get strong again I shall train a Caffre to do fully better than our present clever, but careless, white servant.

I am growing stronger, but I dare not exert myself much yet, lest I lose my feet again. We have an amazing quantity of pine-apples and granadillas. The last are delicious, and refreshing, on a hot day, eaten with sugar and a little wine. The pine-apples were planted expressly to trade with the Cape, and now they are so abundant, there is scarcely a vessel to take them. The market in Natal is soon over-stocked, and no money is

to be got for anything. Sugar-canes are ready to sell for transplanting, and no one rich enough to buy.

With regard to our being kept in Natal for ten years, we do not look for it. If the sugar succeed, we mean to pay our friends in England a visit, if they will have us. As to crossing the ocean so often—the *Jane Morice* did not teach me to dread it, bad though the smells occasionally were.

Smith is very anxious about the working of the sugar plantation. He is a thoroughly trustworthy man, and his wife is a most exemplary woman. The eldest son, Alec, a strong, healthy boy of sixteen, lives with us. He is steady and hard-working. Leyland takes some pains to teach him for an hour every morning before our early breakfast, at nights he learns his chapter when he has time. His parents are well aware of the advantages of his being in such a place, and his mother wishes William, the second son, to take his brother's place when his year is out. All the boys are good, steady, clever lads.

The Sunday previous to starting for Richmond, my husband sent a trusty messenger with the horse and side-saddle to bring Mrs. Bowen to spend the day with us, and to join in our Sunday readings, promising to send her home in the same easy way. The next day, February 19th, brought me the following characteristic letter from her:—

"MY DEAR MRS. FEILDEN,—I shall long remember with grateful and gratified feelings a day spent with you and Mr. F. I was on the point of saying, 'unmingled pleasure,' but such is not ordained for us in our probationary state; doubtless it would not be for our best interests. At any rate, it was my folly which caused any diminution of my enjoyment, and I intend to draw the curtain aside a little, that you may judge of the why and wherefore. A visit to Feniscowles, when its much-esteemed possessors were sufficiently restored to the blessing of health to feel a visit from a poor Cumberground no very great intrusion, had long been anticipated, but it was prevented by untoward circumstances. At length I was informed of your proposed absence, and

at the same time most kindly invited to spend a day with you, and with your wonted good feeling, making such arrangements for my safe and comfortable transit, as utterly precluded any hesitation if I had felt any. Then I thought what a number of questions I would ask about all those interesting occurrences which must accompany and succeed your leaving home. My heart was quite full of them; and what did I do? Oh, my abominable click-clack tongue! It speedily set up a movement of its own, unregulated by either head or heart, and went off with the speed of an electric telegraph, but failing in its utility. Will you pardon this folly, my dear friend? taking into consideration that my repentance kept me awake most of the night, and considerably disturbs my equanimity this morning.

. . . . . .

"I shall think a great deal about Mr. F.'s employments and enjoyments, and, I fear, annoyances also, for where can you go to escape them? Please to tell him that an old woman would give a word of advice with her blessing; it is, to be careful to avoid a *coup de soleil*, not to be late in the bush, or too eager after elephants' tusks, tigers' skins, or boa-constrictors—tough coats to make slippers of, which the Caffres do—to be aware that crocodiles dwell in and near the rivers, and live on fish, when they can get nothing better! I bethink me of poor Mr. Butler and his narrow escape with life, paying for it with many wounds, and more recently Mr. Wilson's horse! As regards myself, I am pretty brave, but for my friends my feelings are rather cowardly. I am utterly ignorant of the way to Richmond, and all about it, except that I saw a sketch, with a former servant, of a dwelling and land belonging to his father within a short distance of Richmond. It appeared to be a wild and very hilly country. I hope you will find the change beneficial, and then I shall be satisfied; but the change homeward again will please me best, on my own account!

"Will you laugh at me, if I say your friend Mr. K. might find other amusement for his fingers than an ever-

lasting adjusting of his upper lip's disfigurement? I take him to be an intelligent gentleman, and I shall be pleased, I have no doubt, with his acquaintance; but it is one of my unfashionable peculiarities to have rather a dislike to these growing enormities, which seem to have become popular, and I expect we shall have as many orders of moustaches, as of monks and friars. I do not object to moderate whiskers; but what does it signify what foolish fancies an old woman takes into her head? I do not expect you will read all this at once, if ever; but my pen will go, as my tongue did yesterday. I think you named Shakspeare, will you like to take him with you? he is not a bad companion. I shall send a few artichoke plants. With very kind regards to Mr. F., and with fervent prayers for your safety, and worlds of good wishes, &c., &c. "M. B."

"MY DEAR MRS. BOWEN,—With hands trembling with the heat and unusual work, I must attempt to leave another 'love-token' behind me, though nothing like the one I got a few days ago. You must make allowance for the calmness of my character, as much as you ask me to make allowance for the enthusiasm of yours.

"Our pretty room you admired so much, is just like a pawnbroker's shop. We have been living in a complete mess since Monday morning, each day making it a little worse. The wagons are to be packed to-day with everything we may require during three months. They were to have started this afternoon, but it remains to be seen whether they can be made ready. It is thought they can make the journey in two days; I don't know what kind of place we are going to, but will try to answer some of your questions, and I must write to you when we get a little settled. Richmond is about fifteen miles from Maritzberg; the post goes once a week through that place. I understand it is a small village on the hills, with a very primitive set of people, with a minister from the American Missions; Mr. and Mrs. Pigg, respectable farmers, who were in the same ship with my husband on his first visit to Natal; also a workman whom Mr. F. once employed; but who else I

do not know. We take only Caffres; we cannot spare either Alec or his brothers. We ride on horseback the first day, stopping to rest at Mrs. Ashton's, and Mrs. Potgieter's, if we get so far, or we sleep in the wagon before quite reaching her house. We take everything we shall require; there is a 'store' there, but Leyland says, 'very little in it.' Mrs. Smith takes charge here during our absence, and Mr. Kock has kindly promised to ride up now and then to see that all is right. If Mr. Feilden comes down to Durban (as in the event of a mail he probably will) I shall be alone, but not more so than I was here, Mrs. Pigg being very near.

"I gave my husband your good advice, and what will you say to my impudence, but thinking it might have a good effect, I gave Mr. Kock your hint, too! He laughed, and said he was obliged to nurse his moustaches to keep them in order. I suspected as much, for they are very harsh; but these things are considered a great protection either in cold or heat. The doctors are all in favour of hair on the upper lip, saying it would save many pulmonary complaints, so I fancy we must knock under, and submit with a good grace. I confess I think they wear horrid beards here; a bird might build its nest in Mr. Proudfoot's, and his is better kept than many. My husband thought you had made a hit at his also, but the secret of his is that no razor has ever touched his face, which he washes as you or I would, and is saved an immensity of trouble and time in dressing. Before he was married he used to stain it dark brown, and it looked very nice. I always had a predilection in favour of the moustache, without imagining I should marry one. Thank you for the offer of Shakspeare, but we will not rob you of his company for so long a time; perhaps on our return you will lend the book.

"Mr. F. is taking paint to repaint his wagons, so you can fancy me helping in that work. Thanking you, my dear friend, and asking you to continue your prayers for us, that we may never fall away, but keep our lamps trimmed ready,—Believe me, yours affectionately,

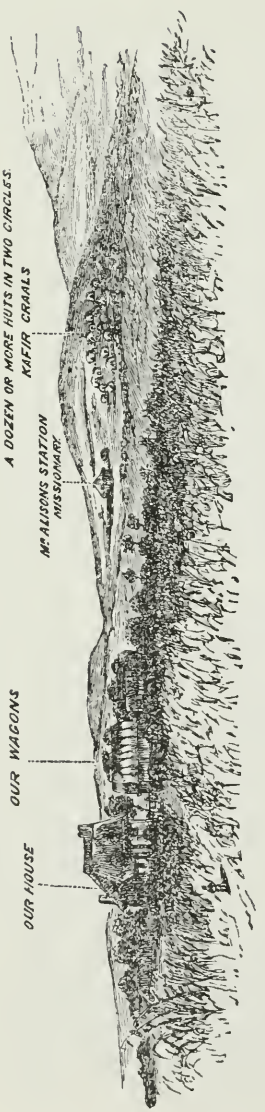
"E. W. F."

CHAPTER XXII.

WE accomplished our journey to Richmond, but I can find no record among my papers of our route, and so shall extract from a letter giving a description of the place and our life while there.

We packed off two wagons and twenty-four oxen, ourselves and two horses, for a long gipsying excursion, to give the whole family change of air and relaxation. Richmond, on the Illovo, is the nucleus of an ideal town to exist some time perhaps, in a splendid pasture land, where farming on a small scale has answered extremely well, but where there is not wealth sufficient to try it on a larger. The country is most productive; we are delighted with it, and all the people seem to be primitive and neighbourly. A few small farm-houses are scattered about, built by their owners in great measure. After our arrival, one sent us a pound of fresh butter; another, a round of beef; a third, fruit, with a couple of boiled mealie cobs, which we found so good that the gift has been repeated daily. There is no public-house in the village, and only one store with "very little in it." One ox is killed weekly for sale; beyond this, the people must trust to their own resources, which accounts for a piece of beef being sent to new comers. Of course, we try to make up in some way for these kindnesses.

Our wagon had an open fretwork top—imagine how beautiful it must have looked—hung with great bunches of bananas and pine-apples; these have made very acceptable presents up here, where they do not grow so well. To a Dutch farmer, who has lent us a cow for our stay of three months, my husband made a present



OUR HOUSE AT RICHMOND.

of some gunpowder, which has greatly delighted him, and so on. There is an excellent clergyman, beloved by all, with his amiable wife and daughter; and a pretty little church is in process of erection, but lagging for want of funds. I say from my heart, "Success to Richmond on the Illovo."

On Sunday morning a respectable man of the name of We r called on his way to church, carrying a paper bag, which he begged to present, containing four or five bunches of cluster grapes, and a dozen or two of ripe figs. I am told he has a beautiful garden. In the afternoon a gentleman farmer sent a basket full of fine ripe figs. Another man coming out of his garden with his hands full of granadillas hoped I would accept them! This man we have employed to put up a few shelves and pegs to make our hut or cottage habitable, and to contrive a shower-bath room outside, that I may have a bath every morning. The stream of water is carried past the garden gate, constantly flowing from a spring three miles distant, so we are well served with fresh flowing water. We have a nice garden, with

plenty of potatoes, vegetable marrows, and pumpkins in it. We have five rooms to our house, besides the Caffre craal where we cook, and the rent for three months is 2*l.* sterling! I hope it won't quite break us; but now I must explain that the whole house would stand in a moderate-sized drawing-room, and here I may introduce a sketch of it taken on the spot—a very correct likeness, sent to England in a letter to the Dowager Lady Feilden.

The walls are barely white-washed, the floors (except that of the room we live in, which is roughly flagged) are of earth, hardened by some unmentionable process very common in Natal, and the only ceiling above our heads is the thatched roof with the wooden rafters. And yet, if it were not for the fleas, which swarmed when we first came, we should be very snug and comfortable. We brought stores of sugar, tea, coffee, rice, &c., &c., with us, as well as our bed and sofa-chair. Our dinner yesterday consisted of a haunch of venison in fine order, tomato sauce, such as Mr. Pickwick would have relished, potatoes, vegetable-marrow, cream cheese (which I made in mistake for butter), granadillas with cream, grapes, and figs; a cup of good coffee to wash all down. The country abounds in game, and there are few, if any, snakes here. At a farm in the neighbourhood the walnut, chestnut, elderberry, quince, plum, and pear trees are all growing, and in healthy condition.

Our great wagon is very nearly as long as our house. A small shed at the end of the garden affords shelter for horse and fowls, while a large tub on the roof forms a shower-bath. Servants in England would hardly submit to the rough floor of our sitting-room, yet when those of their rank—not class, for there are few servants here—come out and have their own house and garden, their cow, &c., in this style, it is astonishing how much they think of themselves, and how comfortably they seem to live, after getting over the first two or three years of hard work and wretchedness. A few of a higher rank are scattered about as farmers, but the children only can expect to reap the fruits of their parents' toil. There is a very respectable family of

Arbuthnots on a farm five miles off, who came out on Byrne's scheme. They entrusted their money into his hands till they should arrive in Natal, and have never seen more of it! They are not singular; they lived either two or three years in Caffre huts of their own erecting. Now they have built a comfortable cottage, and are sending their boys to learn to read at the village school. Those who came with nothing have in many instances got on the most successfully. As they had no property to risk, they probably fattened on their less fortunate neighbours.

Although Richmond is so small a village, there is a population around of 300. Some of them came out in the emigrant ship which was wrecked after it had come to anchor outside the bar. The 290 passengers were saved, I believe, but lost everything, and underwent great hardships, sleeping on the beach, and half starved. One woman told me that she lost the power of taste, owing to the exposure, cold, and wet she suffered then, and had never recovered it. Many of these unlucky emigrants are doing well now, without Mr. Byrne's aid. Each little cottage has its pretty garden fenced in, and is full of good things.

The fleas were our great torment at first, and in answer to a note of mine to Mrs. Bowen, I received a merry reply as follows:—

"Your story of the fleas recalls to my mind some of my soldiering days. We were marched from Portsmouth to Winchester; it poured heavily torrents of rain; I in an open gig with our servant. Like a kind wife, I had filled the gig-box with a change for my husband, but none for myself. I went to bed while my clothes dried, and before the regiment arrived had a good fire for him, and all required, and he did not forget me; but the poor men took possession of their barracks in woful condition, for it was the days of pipe-clay on their tight leathers. Well, those barracks were in what was called King Charles' Hunting-box. It had never been finished, but the rooms were immensely large every way, and a whole company (at that time

only eighty men) with wives and children was thrust into one room—there were ten companies. Can you imagine the beautiful confusion? The next morning's report was sad for them, yet almost laughable for unconcerned spectators. The rooms had not been tenanted for some months, and had been left dirty. When invaded, however, by man, they were not found so untenanted as supposed. Clouds of fleas almost put the lights out. The men were put to throw buckets of water and swill out the rooms. Oh! the poor women! The surgeon of the regiment was a facetious man. He told them, 'It was cowardly to attack the fleas in their weak condition; only let them live a week and there would be some fun in killing them.' I was not within these walls, except to look at them after a week's cleaning. Only white dresses were worn then, and I, like my lady companions, returned with spotted gown and more company than was agreeable. Such things were! Fleas are a nuisance anywhere and at any time.

"My paper is done, and so is my wrist. I sprained it yesterday, and it is painful, so please excuse me.—Yours, &c., &c., M. BOWEN. *March 23rd.*"

The Caffre we took with us up the country, Caffre Tom, speaks English, and, for a marvel, does his work without being watched. Some Caffres are very shrewd and clever, but Tom is the most of a genius I have yet met with, and possesses a frank, good-tempered face that meets one always with a smile. His accomplishments are various. He milks the cow and the goat, attends to the horse, cleans the harness, shoes and boots, chops wood for fires, and cooks. He cleans out our rooms, he can skim the milk, wash the dishes nicely, and clean knives. In short, he is now our factotum, and can put his hand to anything. He drives a team of oxen well, and that is no joke. He gets double the usual wages, and we think he is worth the money. He is, moreover, very polite. It was a treat to see him hand me over a dangerous step; he pointed out each step I must take, and offered his hand lest I should slip into the water. But to see him help me on to my horse!

his hands clasped for my foot to step into, and his shoulder raised for my hand to rest upon, with such a gallant air. Tom was a gentleman!

Our cow gave us abundance of good milk, and butter we churned in the slop-basin with a spoon. We make our own bread, of course, and are the only people in the place who possess white flour, which we brought with us. Mealie meal, or Indian corn ground fine, is what is generally used, and we mix it with ours for economy. I put a large spoonful of our own grown and made arrowroot with excellent effect into our last loaf. Our life is indeed a very rural and primitive one in this simple and beautiful country.

Firewood has to be brought from forests several miles up the hills. My husband asked me if I would like to ride on the horse behind the wagon that was prepared to go for wood, and he would take a seat on the wagon-box and see a little of the country. Of course, I was very happy, so off we set, taking some prog with us and a blanket or two, with some mats in case of rain or other chances. It was fortunate we did so, for the journey proved long, and we had to remain all night or return with half-quantity of wood. The Caffres lighted a fire and cooked for us, and my husband stretched a blanket over a rope on posts in the form of a tent, placing the mats and a tiger-skin on the ground beneath it. We crept in, and really slept very snugly and comfortably. There was a little rain in the night, but our tent kept us dry, while the grass around was wet till ten o'clock a.m. The forest was very beautiful, but the road to reach it is awfully steep and difficult; the poor oxen often rebelled and got quite confused, going from side to side. One hill must be fully a mile long without a break, and in places too steep for any but a climber. The oxen could scarcely pull up the empty wagons, and on our return both hind-wheels were locked with thick chains. My husband shot a young buck, so we fared well. We had our kettle and a pan or two with us, potatoes, herrings, bread and butter, and meal for porridge. The Caffres slept round the fire, and kept the pot simmering

all night. Our lamp consisted of a bottle, out of which Leyland knocked the bottom, sticking the neck into the ground, while the broken top, or bottom rather, formed a shade for the candle. In the morning we looked around on the country, which was lovely. The clearest stream of water ran underground close by our tent, with a large hole of nature's making for our use. We were on the edge of a wild and very extensive "kloof," full of wood, some of it very fine timber. The water-course was amongst large rocks, with ruins of blown-down trees and beautiful mosses. In wandering about we came upon a pretty little waterfall shut into a natural closet, with dressing-room outside. The fall was so tempting and so secluded that we could not resist, and each went in, in turn, and enjoyed a shower-bath, while the other kept guard at the entrance, but without the chance of seeing any one to warn off the premises.

I received several kind letters and notes from our old friend, Mrs. Bowen, while at Richmond. In one she tells me that "Elijah" has sold his wagon to a man, named Osborne, from Illovo. "Three men, two carts, and ten or twelve oxen are settled down here for the night, and the men talk of starting for the Illovo with the dawn to-morrow. They say they have five rivers to cross, and that they will have to swim themselves, their carts, and oxen. They offer to take anything for me, so I write, as this may chance to reach you before your Richmond post. I am so completely isolated now, that you must not expect an iota of news from me. I have only a dismal, damp story, which you will be sorry to hear.

"*April 13th.*—The men are not gone yet. Last evening it began to rain, and we heard distant thunder, then followed an almost tropical deluge; the heavy rain never ceased all night, and is now carrying on the same work. Alas! to me it is a work of destruction. The late storms had prepared for its reception, and now I can scarce find a dry corner. Thank heaven, my little bed is still dry and snug; but the damp is making rapid approaches towards it on all sides. I had to rise more

than once last night to put basins and deep plates to catch the rain, and before morning I think I might have filled my kettle if the water through the thatch had been clean enough. Well, well! surely an old woman is wonderfully tough, for except twitches all over me, I am not much the worse *yet*. But, oh! do I speak thus lightly of the tender mercies of my gracious God, instead of devoutly acknowledging that it is of His fatherly love and goodness that I am preserved, with many comforts denied to others less unworthy than myself? But He sees my heart! The news as regards our poor soldiers in the East is indeed most distressing. What are my little troubles compared with theirs? It makes me ashamed of naming them. Such storms, such sickness, privations, and disappointments; all the good supply of warm clothing actually in sight, and then sunk in the terrible ocean. Alas! alas! who can glory in war? I hope at least that your dwelling is waterproof, and that in every way you will be preserved from all evil.—Yours affectionately, "M. BOWEN."

April 23rd.—Mr. Feilden and I were returning to our little cabin after having carried our letters for the post at twelve o'clock, when an elderly man came across the field and put a parcel in my hand. "Oh! from Mrs. Bowen," I said, on seeing the handwriting. The man was Elijah's identical Mr. Osborne, a respectable-looking man, at whose cottage we had stopped a few evenings previous during our ride. Mr. Feilden asked how many rivers he had crossed on his journey from Durban. He replied, "Only one, but they would come the other way." I suppose the longer and safer after such heavy rains as Mrs. Bowen described. I remember we were anxious about crossing the Illovo before dark one night, because of the threatening sky. The roads to Richmond are its greatest drawback, but these will improve with increased population.

Our friends the Collins's insisted on our visiting them in Maritzberg. I had not taken many dresses to this quiet little place, not expecting to visit much from the cobbler's cabin. However, we slung a basket over the

pommel of my saddle, and Leyland another over his shoulder, and that was all the luggage we took for four days!

My old friend writes on May 2nd, 1855 :—

"MY DEAR MRS. FEILDEN,—

"Good tidings have reached me at last, even that you have set your faces homeward; but still I must have patience, for your return will be delayed by a previous visit to Maritzberg. I envy your friends the pleasure of seeing you before I can. But, alas! I hardly know if I shall have a cottage standing. I am now preparing my storeroom to sleep in, and my little kitchen for a day-room, and leave Mr. Forrest to pull down and put up again that most abominable thing, 'a thatched roof.' Whether I shall live through all this I cannot foresee; time will tell. The path of my life resembles greatly the paths by which I am surrounded, and I am compelled to own I do not deserve better, if so good! so I try to be contented and thankful. Oh! my dear friend, what are my disquietudes compared to those of my betters (in the true sense of the word)? Cannot you understand what I mean by much experience? I must finish, for it is nonsense to waste time and paper in grumbling stories of self. My servant is waiting to go to town; all are in a hurry to go, but no one dreams of being in a hurry to return.

"Affectionately yours,

"M. BOWEN."

Before leaving Richmond we became so friendly with the kind clergyman and his sweet wife and daughter, that they insisted on carrying us off to their cottage, where we enjoyed a delightful visit of three or four weeks, and had the pleasure of receiving them for an equally agreeable visit at our own house at Feniscowles. I have kept no record that I can find of this time. We were four days and three nights on our homeward journey, sleeping in the wagon. It was a cold journey down, for this is a severe winter for Natal; not a flower in the grass, a bare coldness over the landscape, and the trees only a dull green. We spent a few hours at

the sugar plantation as we passed, and were delighted with the prospect it displays. Sugar-canes will grow splendidly, and every one looks for new life for Natal in consequence. Other parties are planting indigo and coffee, which grow well. The colony, I am told, has all along been self-supporting, contending with difficulties which a little timely aid would overcome. The free labour of the Caffres is a drawback. I would not make slaves of them; but they might, with great advantage to themselves, be apprenticed for a term of years, without a shadow of slavery, by allowance of appeal under ill-usage, and this in return for the protection our Government affords to fugitives from neighbouring oppressive chiefs, who form the chief of the Natal Caffre population, the original inhabitants having been exterminated in native quarrels. The white man found the country almost empty.

We returned from Richmond, on the Illovo, much improved in health and strength, and in good spirits. We heard, by the way, of the arrival of the *Jane Morice*, with the bishop's large party, so as soon as we got a little unpacked, and our horses in order (old Gudgeon was doctoring mine), I donned my cloth habit for the first time (the linen one having the general preference), and we rode into Durban to call on Mrs. Colenso and on Mr. Lamport's bride, a sweet, timid-looking lady, in deep mourning for her mother, who has died since her marriage. Here we found Archdeacon Mackenzie and his sister domiciled, and the Rev. Mr. Bell calling; so we were fortunate, as most of the bishop's party were starting that day for Maritzberg, their headquarters. Miss Mackenzie is a real, hearty Scotch woman, "a fine creature," with a mop of a head of hair. We were both quite taken with her. She has come to work hard, but looks as if she were come for a spree, she has such a bright, cheery look. Her brother (afterwards Bishop Mackenzie, who died so sadly in the wilderness) is just as grave and demure as she is cheerful. We both took him for her husband.

We had rather a ludicrous introduction to Archdeacon

Mackenzie. When walking in Durban we heard a spill behind us, and looking round, saw the Rev. Mr. Lloyd dismounting to help to pick up his brother clergyman who was in the dust. I asked if he had been thrown. He replied, "I can't say I was thrown, but I fell off;" and added, he was not accustomed to horseback. Neither is his sister; she asked me if I could canter.

From Mr. Lamport's we went to the bishop's, where we found the wagons ready to start. Seeing how busy all were we offered not to enter; but the bishop came forward quite warmly to meet us, and took us in to see Mrs. Colenso. We chatted very pleasantly for ten minutes, during which I thought I discovered that Mrs. Colenso had a good deal of experience yet to come.

She has brought out a nurse, "a most valuable person." I thought of Wagland, and how unfit she is likely to prove for the ways of the colony, and I felt sorry for the mistress, and the sacrifices she must make for the nurse. The children all had whooping-cough on board, and one has been ill since landing, and poor Mrs. Colenso wondered how she should be able to return my call, saying she had not been on horseback since she was a girl. I relieved her anxiety on that point, and the bishop said, "Oh, yes, *I* shall come and see you." We chatted about the Caffres, and on my lamenting that I could not speak a word of Zulu, he brought me a dictionary and a grammar of his own compiling; also a translation in Zulu of St. Matthew's Gospel, which Louisa possessed, but which had gone out of print.

When we got home again we found Caffre Bonnet waiting to know if I would take him back again. This was fortunate, for he is a neat, clean, careful Caffre, and Tom, whom we had with us at Richmond, is required at Springfield to drive the wagon with the sugar-cane to the mill. They are just beginning to cut the first crop, which looks beautiful.

May 30*th*.—I have been teaching Bonnet this morning to clean the silver candlesticks. He is very apt and willing, and will work much better under me than under a white servant.

The *Jane Morice* brought us a large tin trunk filled with innumerable luxuries (the gifts of kind friends) from England. All arrived in most perfect order; not a thing injured, or crushed, or cracked. I am told that dear sister Margaret was the packer. If so, she need never fear for her daily bread, for she may engage as a first-rate London packer! The quantity and variety that came out of that box reminded me of the trick of Mr. Love's wonderful portfolio. I shall be afraid to name a want in future; but I see that all these beautiful and useful presents have been sent in pure love, for every article I named is doubled and trebled, and presents are showered upon us in full overflowing measure. How can I ever be thankful enough for so many loving relations and friends? Thirty-six long, interesting letters, too! The pleasure was overpowering. I could not sleep well that night or the next. The unpacking, and examination and admiration of each article as it came out of the box, must have been a sight worth seeing; all our little wants remembered and supplied. The japanned frying-pan is a gem, and shall be kept in the house for our own especial cooking in winter, when we have a fire occasionally, and enjoy trying our skill on an omelette. The thin envelopes, too, are just the thing for our long, thin sheets of paper. The fashionable bonnet shall be worn when I stand Godmother to Mrs. Collins's baby; but my usual headgear is a large, broad-brimmed straw hat, which Mrs. Smith, the farmer's wife, makes of the palm-leaf. She bleaches and splits the leaves, and then sews them into shape, and sells hats to half the men in the colony, I think, for one shilling each. Mine has a very wide brim, and is made after my own fashion. I have trimmed it with a handsome ribbon from England. It shades my eyes charmingly; and I feel quite independent, if not in London fashion.

June 5th.—On Monday we set out on horseback at seven a.m. for Springfield to witness the first cutting of the sugar-cane, and the real commencement of making it into sugar. Two hours' ride brought us to the sugar-

mill, passing through the most lovely bush and field scenery, varied at every step by hill and dell. I had the honour of putting one of the first canes into the crushing machine. For the first trial all went on as well as could be expected ; but the oxen, unaccustomed to circular action, were very obstinate, and did not like their share of the work at all. After staying some time watching the process, we rode through the sugar plantations, which looked like fields of riches, and if it please God, we may look forward to a moderate competency in a few years. Many of the canes are twelve feet long, the thickness of my wrist, and the yield very good. I observed a few stools (as they are called) that looked much more beautiful than the rest ; Leyland told me that they had been trashed,[1] and would consequently be sweeter, but that want of labour prevented their thrashing generally. We sat among the newly-stripped cane leaves, and sucked a sugar-cane, which we found very refreshing. We rode on to Mrs. Smith's (the Smiths are working at Springfield now), where we had a plate of soup ; and, after a rest, we returned to the sugar-mill to see the boiling operation, drinking success to it, both in wine and in sugar juice, I christening the opening day of the work in a glass of wine. It was now four o'clock, and I was not sorry to yield to Mr. Milner's persuasions to "ride up" to Mrs. Milner's house, "close above," and stay all night.

[1] *Trashed*=stripped of dead leaves.

CHAPTER XXIII.

June 9th.—Feniscowles.

I was dressing this morning at six o'clock, when my husband told me that he and our friend, Mr. Kock, were going to ride over to Springfield about the sugar, and they wanted breakfast immediately. I hurried my toilet, and sent Caffre Bonnet (whom I found sweeping out the floor) to get forward with the kitchen work out of doors, while I took his place in the house to make things ready, and we were seated at breakfast at seven o'clock. After seeing the gentlemen off and washing up the china, Saturday's work began. The clothes were counted and sent off with Bonnet to the wash, the room thoroughly dusted and tidied, a meat pie made ready for baking, the bread mixed and kneaded, and when I got this length our neighbour Mrs. Galliers came, and helped me with the bed-rooms. By eleven o'clock I thought the work about done, and sat down to pen a note for Mrs. Galliers to take to Mrs. Bowen. Presently Mr. Bell from my farm came to settle the rent; next Henry Gorge, with our cart and forage from Springfield, for the stable; and after attending to this, and putting up a few articles for him to take back (as we intended going to stay a few days at Springfield), Alec Smith came in for his dinner, and he put bread and cheese on the table for my luncheon. Mr. Oakes, the Government surveyor, calling at this moment, helped me with my bread and cheese, and after a keen talk about boundaries, I walked out with him to look at one of our boundaries; wished him good-morning, and returned to look after the baking of my loaf. Presently I saw Leyland in the distance (an hour before I expected him) looking out for Alec

to take his horse, and no one about to send for him. We rang the great bell to no purpose (the grounds of Feniscowles are extensive), when Bonnet came in sight, bending under his basket load from Durban, looking gay in his bright blue smock frock. My husband despatched him for Alec, and he darted off, leaving his basket of meat on the steps, where cats were watching, so I watched them till he returned. It was now three o'clock, our dinner hour was to be six ; Mr. and Mrs. King and Mr. Kock were all coming to stay till Monday. All was hurry ; there was mustard to mix, curry and soup to prepare, and the meat to attend to. Mrs. Galliers came again offering to stay, so she helped me with the soup, and took the worst part off my hands, that of seeing the various pans put on the fire at the right time. I went into the house to rest and dress, when a Caffre came with a note from Mr. King, saying he had broken his collar bone yesterday, and though he had reached Congella (about a mile off us), he did not feel equal to coming on. It was now near five o'clock, and Leyland, always sympathizing with suffering, ordered his horse and rode through the bush to see him ; and, to my astonishment, reappeared at half-past six with Mr. and Mrs. King, whom he had brought up here to be more comfortable, putting him on his own horse and walking beside him. Mr. King was evidently suffering, but he sat at dinner, and then we sent him to bed. Our other expected guest, Mr. Kock, having heard of Mr. King's serious accident, rode up to excuse himself, which was perhaps as well.

After dinner Mrs. King went upstairs with her husband, and my husband and I were sitting on the sofa, very tired with our day's work, when a "holloa!" from Leyland told me something more was coming. Mr. King was in great pain, and thought the shoulder must have been improperly set. He wanted my husband to try and reset it, but he, fearing to do more harm than good, ordered his horse again, and rode off to Durban to fetch Dr. Best. Mrs. King and I did what we could to relieve the poor sufferer, and then I tried in vain to sleep,

so instead I got out my desk and wrote the account of the day's work. Alec went to sleep on the stairs till he should be wanted to take the horse, but at ten o'clock Leyland had not returned. Bonnet washed and brought in the plates and the silver to be put away, but on my asking for more wood for the fire, he shook his head, and I knew it was no use persisting, for I could not explain the "*why*" in his language, and Caffres have wills of their own. He feared going into the bush.

June 16th.—My old friend Mrs. Bowen writes: "Yesterday afternoon the thatcher came, and we agreed for him to commence on Monday. As to terms I guess I have burnt my fingers, as I always do in the way of bargaining; but what can I do? I am alone, and if I do not have my thatched roof taken down I fear it will not stand upon ceremony, but walk down itself. The whole business is a terrible nuisance to me, but 'what cannot be cured must be endured,' so I pray for patience and strength as is my day. Yesterday Elijah brought home with him a *man* Caffre! Odious animal, as sweet as a wolf! I have always avowed a determination to have only *boy* Caffres, and of this Elijah was well aware, but he did not like fetching water, and made a merit of bringing any one when I wanted Tambooti grass to be cut. Grainger, the thatcher, is strongly recommended to me as a good workman, quiet, honest, and civil; but right thankful shall I be when he says 'Finis.' After all, it will not be done according to my wishes and intentions, but if before the wet season begins I have a waterproof dwelling, I must needs be satisfied. My little, very little, and sole apartment seems likely to be bearable for a time; indeed I am almost inclined for a quotation,—

> "'My house, my house! though thou art small,
> Thou art to me the Escurial.'

"I have this blessing, amongst innumerable others, that my desires and expectations generally adapt themselves wonderfully well to present circumstances. I return your book-cutter with thanks, having found my

own. At present I cannot speak of the work itself, having been too busy to read more than a few pages, yet already I have taken a rather strong dislike to Philip, which is certainly premature; and indeed, Cumming is so awfully interesting that I think no work of fiction ever excited and compelled my attention so greatly. Oh, he is a glorious writer, and every line speaks to the heart. I feel exceedingly grateful to the dear friends who thus supply my mind with nourishing and delicious food, whilst they are ever regardful of the wants and wishes of less serious hours, supplying these also with lighter, but not unwholesome viands. Deprived of these, I should be a solitary and too probably a discontented unit. Thanks to my Heavenly Father, it is never so with me. Tired with the fatigues and annoyances of the day I often am, but when once I shut out the world I feel at home, my store of quietly conversing friends are at hand, and will take no offence if I prefer one to another. Each in its turn receives a due portion of cordial welcome and civil (at least) attention, and usually at an early hour I confide my weary frame to its comfortable little couch, quite certain that 'a Sovereign Protector' I have, unseen, but 'for ever at hand;' and though my sleep is often retarded till near dawn, the hours are passed in peace. Now, my dear Mrs. Feilden, would it not be well if I thought a bit of how much I am intruding on your peace (saying you read to the end) by all this verbiage? So I will have mercy and conclude, with my very kind love, and all sorts of good wishes (except that I do not wish you to run away again so soon), in all which Mr. Feilden is included as far as is right and proper—and I continue to feel that I am yours very affectionately, "M. BOWEN."

June 21st.—I find myself writing:—

"MY DEAR MRS. BOWEN,—I am glad to hear your new house is so snug. I shall certainly come if I can; but I may have to go into Durban one day this week to stand sponsor for Mrs. Collins' baby, and we talk of going to Springfield on Tuesday. I wish they would christen the child on Sunday, for we should like to

attend church, and it is not easy to ride in frequently for any purpose. I must look out some of my pretty things that came from England lately, to wear on the occasion. There are a fashionable bonnet without any front to it, and a very elegant polka mantilla, besides some beautiful new-shaped collars and sleeves. I may as well take the opportunity of wearing them. My friends in England are always sending me things, and really I should have a good life to wear them all out! I would not miss the love that prompts the gifts for any consideration. Mary, whose name will be familiar to you, sends me various little trifles that I begged her to purchase for me, and over and above, amongst others, some morning collars which she has set to habit shirts of her own making. That is what I call showing love. Mr. Feilden is better, but a little thing knocks him up, and two nights ago he lay awake watching me, fearing I was going to have another of those fits, after one of which you will remember seeing me when Mr. and Mrs. Fynn were with us. I had been very much exhausted with reading aloud too long, I believe. The fit did not come on, but I felt ill in the morning and am not quite right yet. I will do what I can for you in the way of getting Caffres, or naming your wants when at Springfield. My husband is cutting bush to-day with all the hands he could muster, or he would send thanks for his orange."

Again, on the 28th of June, 1855, my dear old solitary friend writes me a long and interesting letter, showing how a lady of education and refinement may be buffeted about at near eighty years of age:—

"MY DEAR MRS. FEILDEN,—I felt more deeply my disappointment on Sunday than I can well express, because all around me were at peace, save and except that Mr. Brickhill's cattle thought I had too many poles under my poor denuded verandah, so knocked down two, and acted a few other vagaries. I knew it was useless to fret, and moreover I really do strive to subdue my unruly temper, on the Sabbath day especially, so I only sent to Mrs. Forrest asking to see her son.

He returned with Elijah, and stayed over my little morning service, seeming well pleased therewith, and in the evening his cousin, James Brickhill, came also. He was distressed at the damage done, but I verily believe an overruling providence will bring good out of seeming evil, and bring about a reconciliation; not immediately, perhaps, but I see the dawn. It is painful to be at variance with near and long-esteemed neighbours.

"When I took pen in hand it was in the full purpose of prating a little, in fancied wisdom and real folly, about the 'Heir of Redcliffe,' for the loan of which interesting book, and in particular for your kind notes and messages. I return a multitude of thanks. From first to last I do not like either Philip or Laura, though his latter days' contrition was of a redeeming nature. His sister, odiously in the world and of the world; Lady Eva, to be pitied—lost for want of better training; Mrs. Edmonston, a very lovable mamma; Mr. E. nothing worth noticing; Charles and Charlotte increasing in estimation to the end; Ashfords and Ross's what they should be; Amy, a sweet character, though I fear too perfect for poor, fallen human nature. But Guy is my darling, my darling! even in his darkest days. And oh! how very delightful, almost angelically so, were his dying hours. I do not often meet with such a treat; for in his deeply pious feelings—and few, very few, were his expressions of them—he seemed to me to be entirely free from any degree of affectation, enthusiasm, or display. On the contrary, he appeared to be quite unconscious of saying anything more, or otherwise, than any one else would say in similar circumstances. If any taint of selfishness could be even fancied as belonging to his character, it must be that constant dread he appeared to have, that he had committed some fault; in short, a sacred jealousy over himself, lest he should fail in any known duty. Is there such a mortal on earth?

"*June 29th.*—This begins my third day of noise, dirt, and confusion, but I got on pretty well until yesterday afternoon. A little before three o'clock my old thatch was whirling about in all directions, the few reeds re-

maining on the verandah joining in the dance. In the meantime the sand from the top of my kitchen came all over my sofa, &c., &c. I was wondering what was incommoding my neck, and found my back also under the same infliction, so I was obliged to put Elijah upon a search amongst the lining of my house for a piece large enough to cover the part over my bed at least. More than this could not be obtained, so he said, and I was obliged to be content, for I could not stand upright against the wind, though forced by circumstances to make many attempts. A more trying day I have not often experienced. Thank heaven for a safe and tolerably comfortable night, the wind having somewhat abated, and that I am not much the worse for these 'minor miseries.' What are these compared to those of our people in Russia, and indeed to thousands at home? I do blush that I should complain. Alas! self will be attended to, and I dread cold far more than heat. All this while I have not made any inquiry as to how it fared with you? Do not, pray do not, imagine that I was unmindful of what the storm might cause you to endure. Oh no! but I did hope you were not so badly situated as I am, and I still hope so.

"Mrs. Galliers promised to come to-day; if for a wonder she do, I shall send the book and this almost unintelligible scrawl. Please to excuse it, for I must own that my head and hands are rather disagreeable companions, and yet what could I do without them? Please to offer my kind regards to Mr. F., and accept the kindest wishes of your affectionate friend,

"M. BOWEN.

"PS.—Two beautiful blossoms have cheered me with their living tokens of dear friends' remembrances—did I say?—on the little deep red rose. I am sore afraid of the reckless Caffres hurting it, but have had it protected as well as I can. The 'first cousins to monkeys,' as a Brazilian called them, sung and chattered till I scolded in right earnest, and kept them quiet half an hour. How goes on the christening? I hope you won't leave home in such uncertain weather.—M. B."

I hope I have interested my readers sufficiently in my kind old neighbour, to bear a few more occasional extracts from her letters.

July 3rd, she writes :—"Day after day brings me only a repetition of disappointments, yet I do not complain, for it is only the common lot. Yet in the midst of this inward grumbling, for such I have a strong misgiving is the case, I am not entirely selfish. I did really and truly rejoice to hear that you and Mr. Feilden were in Durban on Sunday. I must not envy, but it would have been very delightful to have met you at the Lord's table. I am still in my humble state, and tolerably content therewith, knowing it is useless to be otherwise. It is true I cannot help sometimes thinking of the dear firesides I shall never see again, and wish that the winds would pass over my little room without threatening to annihilate it, and perhaps me in the rubbish—at least, that I could exclude such unpleasant visitors. Cannot be done, but thanks to your kindness, my dear Mrs. Feilden, my icy feet have fared uncommonly well—very little rheumatism, and rarely the cramp. Those beautiful and most comfortable socks, bootkins, or what is their proper name? have been my doctor and nurse, night and part of each day, and never do I put them on without blessing and loving the giver. Surely there is a cause!

"Things never run smoothly long together here, and so it has happened that George Haigh has left me, and poor Mrs. Galliers cannot come to help me when I am more than usually in want of assistance, and in consequence Elijah is more consequential and dictatorial than I well know how to bear, nor would I in other circumstances; but it is hard to find another, or even Caffres, when most required. My house proved to be in a worse state than was expected, and in consequence there is increased expense. (I hope I shan't get into the 'Tronk.') I should like to see what you think of my abode, which I do not even hope to change under a week or ten days.

"I like the 'Experience of Life' as far as I have

gone, which is about half-way, and thank you for it. I intend to tell Elijah to go round your road when he goes to town to-morrow, and leave this note. He is also to call on Mrs. Galliers about her pig, and perhaps she will have occasion to send a Caffre to Keventrenfa. If so, he would be the bearer of a note from you, my dear Mrs. F., which would be most welcome."

About this time a friend wrote from Richmond: "The bishop's family are expected in Maritzberg this week; I suppose they will occupy Government House at present. Everything seems progressing at the bishop's mission station, near Maritzberg. How full of hope the good bishop seems with regard to his mission to the Caffres; and why should he not be so? If he have peculiar difficulties to encounter, still is anything too hard for the Lord?"

July 8th.—We have been a week in Durban. We rode in last Sunday barely in time to be in church before service began. It was communion Sunday, and we stayed very quietly and comfortably. Last week was the Durban Rangers' drill week, which ended on Friday afternoon. On Saturday we rode out to Feniscowles and to call on Mrs. Bowen, who was charmed to see us. We stayed an hour at least, and rode back to Durban to stay over another Sunday, and probably Monday if Mrs. Collins' baby should be christened. But, alas! this has raised such a stir and question, and so many prejudices, that we should almost have been better at home. The bishop is trying to carry everything with a high hand, and people do not like to knock under all at once and change all their notions and customs without sufficient reason. Children are all to be baptized on Sunday during service, and if that makes the service too long, the psalms or something must be omitted. Now, the congregation do not like this. Leyland says he will not stand godfather before all the people during the service, and he does not see that the rubric enforces such. Mr. Collins, the father, says he will not make such a display in church, and Mrs. Collins says that, with all the domestic arrangements in a colonial

household, it is impossible that both parents can be so long absent from their house; moreover, that she cannot be nursing the baby to keep him good during the whole service. Then my old scruples, about *literal* interpretation of the responses, come in to jar upon my feelings. The archdeacon says it cannot be intended to mean more than I should wish to do, or will try, &c., &c.; but I say if they are so strict in observing the letter of the rubric, why are they less so in interpreting the reading of the responses? There was a christening this morning, and it occupied quite half the time of the morning service, omitting the psalms. With my poor ears I could not make out where they were, or what about, so really the distraction from all these various causes and the having been a little late in church, prevented my joining in almost any part of the service, and I wished we were quietly reading the prayers at home with the young Smiths for congregation.[1]

The Durban church is to be formally given over to the bishop to-morrow. He declined to have anything to do with it unless it were put entirely and completely under his own management, in which case he will take over all responsibilities, liabilities, debts, &c., &c. This question about baptism has so roused the whole community, that I do not know what will be the end of the meeting to-morrow. The bishop, too, has hurt the feelings of many by a confession of bigotry—so 'tis called. The Dissenters invited him to a tea-party, in connection with the laying the foundation stone of a new chapel. Instead of simply declining, which would have been dignified and sufficient, the bishop tells them in his note that he does not think the building of such

[1] Mrs. Collins' baby was christened, on the 24th, in church. It was a saint's day, and prayers were read. There was also a churching during the service. Mr. Proudfoot and we were sponsors, Mr. Kock standing proxy for Mr. Feilden, who unluckily could not ride in, both himself and his horse being rather out of order; so I rode in alone, with William Smith leading the other horse to take it on to Springfield, to get well. We all dined with Mr. and Mrs. Collins, and they and Mr. Proudfoot rode home with me.

a chapel likely to forward Christianity; he believes them to be earnest in their desires to forward it, and he wishes them "such a" blessing as God may vouchsafe them, or something like that. The whole people are up in arms against him, and the Churchmen are sorry he should have given such cause of offence, which they cannot justify. The Dissenters, I believe, are Independents and Baptists *united*.

I cannot think that the spirit of religion consists in outward forms and ceremonies, though these tend to good, for, where the means are used, a blessing is promised to follow; but I do think our Church has the best "form of sound words." There is danger of substituting form for spirit, in the way they are now going on, trying to revive the early practices of the Church which may not be quite expedient for the present times.

July 31*st*.—Poor Mrs. Bowen's thatching of her little cottage went on but slowly. She writes: "It is a weary world, and I am weary of it; but still there comes a gleam of sunshine, and I feel the genial influence. Surely it is a kind word, a loving smile, or a deed of kindliness from a friend which gives this foretaste of better things. Your welcome note was a cordial, and revived me. I asked the little boy if he knew whether Mrs. Feilden was better, and he seemed quite pleased to say, 'Yes, ma'am,' showing his beautiful white teeth; I wish I had such for use, never caring for the beauty. I have been tired, vexed, and unwell all morning. Yesterday, for five hours during the absence of Elijah, I never rested a moment, going to and fro, heavily laden with a hundred unnecessary things (for we really want but little), from the storeroom to my cottage, and I do feel the effects to-day pretty considerably, but cannot be quiet yet. There is still much—laughable to say *much* here—to be done before I can say *finis;* peradventure it may be said to *me* first! How kind of Mr. Feilden to think of me during the storm. Thank heaven, I was safe, though for a few minutes a little nervous—for the kitchen roof threatened to entomb me, but it was not so ordained. I long to talk to you. I do not say I was

unhappy in my narrow dwelling, as my thoughts have recently been directed to a much narrower: where 'the weary are at rest.' Ah! blessed Saviour! Something better than rest is in prospect, even to see Jesus, 'the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.' What can it signify where and what may be my experience of life? a taper just going out. Pardon me, my dear Mrs. Feilden; I am not doing right to inflict my sombre thoughts on you, but indeed they are neither dark nor dull to me. They are rather soothing and calm, just what my unruly spirits require.

"I was surprised lately, by a visit from my young friend, James Brickhill; he gave me full particulars of the sweetly peaceful end of his beloved mother, and the examination which, at her own request, had taken place. It certainly appears miraculous that she had lived in such a state for years—the heart ossified, lungs adhering to the side, and water on the chest! I think it was a wise and kind suggestion of the poor sufferer, as it evidently helped to console those so devotedly attached to her, by considering what a glorious and happy change it was for her. The tenor of her life gave them leave to believe this, and this, with much prayer for resignation and support, James did name as the great source of their consolation. I hope I have not carried my report too far, but it occurred to me that it might not be uninteresting."

CHAPTER XXIV.

July 27th.—We are all busy with sugar just now. My husband's crop is the first in the market, and is getting high prices, but the mill does its work so slowly that I fear others will be ready to compete with him soon. He has had much to contend with, and often comes in quite out of spirits; but, on the whole, the prospect begins to brighten, and I hope that in a year or two we may be able to go home and see our dear friends once more. What a struggle life is! or rather man makes it so, by making so many superfluities become necessary adjuncts. Half an English gentleman's expenses are for show, and not for comfort, nor even convenience; yet society has made them necessary. In Natal there is but little of that, yet even here it is on a small scale.

We called on a bride lately. The drawing-room was crammed with furniture, so that when once seated there was no further move to be made. We resist this cramming in the country, and have no carpet. Carpets only breed fleas in this hot country, and I always think our room looks much more livable in consequence of its greater ease and freedom. Our bed-room has, not inaptly, been compared to a ship's cabin: it is storeroom and bookcase, and even has to serve for cellar till we get the other half of the house up.

Mrs. M. is going to England with her children, disgusted with colonial life and difficulties. Her husband has sold everything, and means to follow his wife. He was just on the threshold of making money from his sugar plantation; but he told me "it was misery to have his family, and misery to be without them, and what

could a man do?" I heard that she let her husband do the housework, as well as that of the plantations!

The bishop's party are gone to Maritzberg, where they will find plenty of work. As far as civilizing the Caffres goes they may succeed, because the Caffres are handy when taught, and civilization doubtless precedes Christianity; but its effects are strange here without the softening influence of true heartfelt religion. As far as our generation is concerned, I do not look for much good, but "the seed cast upon the waters will be found after many days." They should begin with the children; very nice faces many of them have. I often wish I could talk freely with them, for they all seem to like me. Is it not a curious thing that, out of a population of many thousands, planters cannot secure labour to gather in their crops? My husband has just sold his arrowroot and his oats in the ground for less than half their value, because he cannot command labour to harvest them, the sugar-cane requiring all he has. I have just been eating a spoonful of his sugar, which is like sugar candy. Our Governor has gone to England, and we hope that his representations may be of some use on the labour question, as the welfare of Natal depends on it.

We have got rid of old drunken Gudgeon at last, though he may turn up again like a bad penny. Ever since he returned from his hunting expedition with Captain Stephenson he has been hanging on our hands on the sick list; that is, he moped and groaned, and lost his spirit, thinking he was going to die, and he would not work. At last, Leyland told him he would send him home to England. He ordered a few things for him and was about to take his passage when Gudgeon disappeared, and after some inquiry it was found that he had gone to the Cape on board the *Cleopatra* as cook! He has some strange notions, and may have thought he would save my husband the passage money and work his way home, but novelty and change are what he desires, and he had tired of his quiet life here. We are very glad to be rid of him.

Mrs. Galliers' husband has gone off to the diggings in Australia, his reason being that the high wages he gained in Durban had put some spare cash in his pocket, and he must spend it! His wife hopes he may soon return. He sent her about 10*l.* the other day, but I believe she has spent none of it. I am teaching little Billy to read; he is quite proud to be allowed to come for his lesson.

Poor old Mrs. Bowen looks worn and aged this winter. She writes that she desires to be obedient and willing either "to go or stay," and she desires to feel that all is well, whichever way her Heavenly Father wills. She must have a cheerful spirit, and full occupation for her mind, or her life would be very lonely.

August 8th.—We rode over to Springfield yesterday. It was a lovely ride, the gorgeous scarlet of the Caffre-boom, just now in flower, almost atoning for the absence of the autumnal tints of other lands. We passed over part of the new road being made by the soldiers over the Berea, to avoid a very steep hill; it reminded me of an English road. Leyland entered one of the tents erected for the soldiers, and invited the officer (Lieut. Stubbs) to return with us to dinner and stay all night. On being told of this, I said, "Oh! but we have only cold beef and broth!" Presently I suggested asking Mrs. Smith to kill and truss a fowl, and said to my husband, "You shall put it in your pocket to take home, it will soon be cooked;" and so it was agreed. The fowl was killed and made ready with some peas and potatoes, and a Caffre sent over with them and a note to William Smith—aged fourteen—to get a good dinner for our return. On returning, however, Mr. Stubbs came forward to excuse himself, one of the men having been taken ill and the doctor sent for, and he must stay for the doctor. We told him to bring Dr. Cunninghame with him, and we sent a Caffre to show them the way to our new road, four miles off; but we had our good dinner all to ourselves, and after our cold beef anticipations of the morning, I cannot do less than write out the bill of fare. We had found some mushrooms in

our ride, which we fried in my pretty little "room" frying-pan, just at the right moment; we had new potatoes and green peas, two kinds of mulligitawny soup, boiled beef, a hash, a roasted fowl, and some fine lettuces made into a beautiful salad, and we really feasted after our long ride. A glass of porter made me so sleepy that I went off to bed, and dreamed vigorously of the bishop filling a new church, &c., &c., but I found that Leyland had not only burned down a good long candle reading, but had also stretched across to the shelf above to get another.

The next day my husband accompanied Mr. Proudfoot to his farm on the Inanda for a few days' shooting, himself with his gun and his pockets full on one horse, and a spare horse with his pack. The weather changed, and the gentlemen were drenched. The rain penetrated into the house or hut, so that they could scarcely light a fire to cook their food, and finally they retreated to an empty stall in the stable to cook for themselves, the Caffre having gone off to get married. They were very merry under all their disasters, and when they went to look for their bottle of brandy they found it had been broken on the journey, and its contents lost. My husband had sprained his knee a little and got extra cold, but says they had great fun seeing a troop of baboons running down a steep hill, and carrying their young ones—a most curious sight. He brought me home a pow tied to the saddle of his second horse, and wishes I had been with him to see the baboons. Mrs. Mellor (the magistrate's wife) sent me a very pretty feather duster, made from the feathers of a pow, which her husband had shot. If I could get a handle I should like to make one out of my husband's pow to send to England. Mrs. Mellor's gift, she says, is made in consequence of the pleasure she experienced on seeing my embroidered flowers. This is the first tribute to talent I have ever received!

I found a new flower myself to-day in the bush; even my husband's quick eyes had never encountered one of its kind. It is a shrub with something of a bay or

laurestina leaf. The flower has four rather small yellow green petals in the centre, whence spring a number of pure white stamens, like myrtle, but longer; a pink pistil pointed green, and with the richest perfume imaginable. The flower fades immediately on being broken from the tree, but I mean to introduce it into my next piece of embroidery. Many of these flowers are, however, very awkward for a piece of work, and they cramp the design. Their stems are stiff and straight, and, like the long, bony arms of a lady, are better covered; the difficulty is to cover them elegantly. The scarlets are very grand in Natal; the scarlet geranium and Caffre-boom are in full glory. No wools I have yet had from England or Germany have equalled their brilliance when placed beside the flower. The boom is an orange scarlet.

We begin to talk about building our new kitchen, but we must wait a good while for it. William Smith is a nice, active, intelligent boy, almost as good a cook as his mother. He saves me a great deal of the disagreeable part of the kitchen work, and Bonnet has got more into my ways, so that I have not half the labour I have hitherto had. This week, however, I have been at my old work. Some of the Springfield Caffres are sick, and we have sent all the help we can from Feniscowles to take their work, so we have had to take our share at home. I cooked a beefsteak in my mother's beautiful little frying-pan on the fire in our room, and young William cooked the pow for our dinner, and I hope we felt thankful. He baked the loaf which I had laid in the forenoon. I shall be useful at a picnic, if ever I go to another where the dinner has to be cooked, as well as the table-cloth laid on the green sward.

Poor Mrs. Bowen is fairly victimized by her manservant, who thinks she cannot do without him. He lives in a small cottage beside her, a sort of lodge to her drive, and caters for himself. Lately he has been paying his addresses to a young widow. He purveys rather shortly for his own living, and thus requires to visit

Durban often, leaving the poor old lady without a bit of dinner cooked. She has had to send over for Mrs. Galliers during Elijah's absence, and to-day I have a long letter descriptive of her troubles, half ludicrously set forth. She has only had two dinners cooked this week, but a fowl lasts her a long time. I must here extract from her own letter:—

"MY DEAR MRS. FEILDEN,—I embrace a moment's quiet to say something; whether to the purpose or not you shall be the judge. My own ideas are very like the weather round and about, and rather troublesome; and, in fact, it will be a little volume of troubles I shall have to pen, for I cannot keep them at a due distance from my thoughts, although I do at times struggle hard for victory. I have lately had a regular infliction of cattle visitations, always either strangers' or from Mrs. Forrest, and it really is a severe trial of patience, as I cannot get either white or coloured beings to repair the mischief done. My own feeble hands have filled up some of the holes, but it is useless, for here they were again last night, so near the back of my bed that I anticipated direful news in the morning. I am thankful to say the mischief is less than I expected, and I have great cause for thankfulness for other mercies. You know, I believe, that I indulge myself with a little lamp of cocoa oil for company and fancied safety—not altogether fancy last night, for just as I withdrew my last stocking, and looked lovingly at my dear little bed, I was attracted by something moving behind one of my trunks. I relit a candle, and had the pleasure of seeing a very pretty snake! I knew it would be useless to ring for Elijah, who takes a long time to hear the bell, and, moreover, he is frequently out all night or the greater part thereof; so I prayed for strength, and *had it*. The poor thing had not lived so long in the world as to be tired of it, so he did his best to repel my attacks, and, verily, it was a hard-fought battle, with a multitude of obstructions to my taking the intended aim at head and tail. On the contrary, I could only reach the middle, and he all the time showing his teeth at me

most bravely. My warlike instrument was (now don't laugh, for it is true) my rolling-pin! which I usually keep in a corner, and fortunately there it was. Being very heavy, I found it quite serviceable, and at length proved conqueror, having crushed him from head to tail. Then, with my large scissors, I carried him triumphantly into the parlour. Poor thing! it was a pity, for he was only three-quarters of a yard long, and, consequently, had seen but little of the world. I confess that, with the surprise, exertion, and prostration, I was a little overdone; nervous, and easily disturbed throughout the wearisome and sleepless night. But I had many sweet hymns and psalms ready at hand, and many, many well-remembered mercies to recall, proving that all shall be well to those who love and trust in God. So I am none the worse to-day, but I cannot say I am any better.

"*August 17th.*—Last night's heavy storm of thunder and rain has, no doubt, done its beneficial work of purifying the air, but it is not an easy task to meet the rude storms of life in such a way as may render them also beneficial by dispersing all evil tempers,—discontented, if not repining, feelings; in short, every vain or sinful imagination that would disturb and envelop in thick gloom the soul's brightest aspirations, and even obstruct our views of the 'Sun of Righteousness,' so necessary to sustain and animate the struggling spirit.

"*August 18th.*—I had a double benefit last night—the cattle, as usual. I did ring, and Elijah did come, and spoke to me at the window; but I think he saw the tiger, which took away my two sole remaining fowls and broke my nice pen to pieces, for I heard him (Elijah, I mean) give a grunt, and walk off! The cattle were here in the morning, and allowed to please themselves. How I shall fare in his absence to-day (for he must go to town) I know not; and his head is bewildered with the anticipated gaieties at 'Prospect' next Tuesday, when he expects a whole holiday. Woe is me! half his time is spent far away; but he is useful when at home, and 'further this deponent sayeth not.'

"I did wish to write somewhat largely about Jupiter, and all the glorious and wonderful things set forth with pomp of erudition and vainglory by the 'Brewster.' He is not a brewer to my taste! I prefer the soul-searching and soul-soothing lectures and songs of Cummings; the practical lessons of Angel James; or the good old plainness of Doddridge, infinitely before his lofty, and to me, stultifying philosophy. It is beyond my reach, for I feel that a linnet cannot gaze with the eyes of an eagle, and find also 'that many, like the violet, are safest in the shade.' There are, indeed, many passages of great beauty, both as to matter and manner; but the simple believer in the Scriptures, and the humble but most sincere worshipper of the great Creator in His works and His words, does not require such extreme excitement to assist his fervour. I rather think, or at least, feel, that it is distressingly overwhelming to the limited extent of my mental powers; but I have not gone through the volume, and I must wait a bit for a more extensive acquaintance—naming, however, one great disadvantage under which I labour. From childhood I have had an unconquerable aversion to lengthened numeration tables, and I cannot get beyond a million. All over that trifle (to him) baffles my brain-work, and it is useless to puzzle myself about it. You will hereby perceive what a poor figure I make when I get among the stars. I fear this humiliating confession will lessen your too flattering opinion of me, but I trust it will not lessen the conviction that I am most sincerely your affectionate friend, "M. BOWEN."

Sir David Brewster's billions and trillions were certainly beyond my limited powers of calculation, but when once I really apprehended him I could see nothing but what was good and right in his wonderful book entitled "More Worlds than One." His ideas respecting the planetary system, and the countless orbs moving round their suns, have greatly and beautifully enlarged my thoughts of the marvellous and infinite works of the Creator. And who shall limit His power? Infinite! what does that word mean? I never felt its force (even

where I acknowledged the term as we are taught from infancy) in the vivid manner in which Brewster's work has caused me to feel it.

August 18th.—It was half-past seven before I rose this morning, and nearly nine before we had finished breakfast. The horses strayed last night, and had to be looked for this morning, so extra work fell to my share again, for it was Saturday, and the Caffre had to be sent to Durban for meat and meal. At four o'clock I began to look out anxiously for his return, but no signs were visible. Little Billy brought me a note from Mrs. Bowen, so I gave the child his lesson, read my note, tried to think, and walked up to the bush-path; but still no Bonnet, and no William! I looked into the kitchen to see if there was any fire; not a bit. I looked at my bread pan, and my loaf had risen to the top of the dish, and would surely be sour if not attended to; so finding a live piece of fire in the house grate, I tried to light the fire myself in the kitchen, and put the bread on in the bakepan (we have no oven). I fanned away at the fire with my garden hat, got a blaze at last, and put on the bread; but the smoke was blinding me, so that I could not finish the operation by putting wood on the lid of the pan to bake the loaf above as well as below. Still neither William nor Bonnet appeared, and I set off to get Mrs. Galliers' help. She was washing her children to put them to bed. Billy was naked on the floor. She most good-naturedly said she would leave them and come down the hill; but I could not allow her to do this, fearing some accident if they were left so, and, therefore, I said I would stay with the children; and reluctantly, though gladly, she accepted my offer, saying that Billy could wash himself. I saw, however, that he did not manage the thing well, so I washed and dried him, and carried him into bed naked, not knowing where his night-gown was. Then I undressed the pretty little girl, washed her, and put her to bed in the same way. By this time Mrs. Galliers came back, saying she had found her own Caffre and had set him to work, and that William had at last returned, but not

Bonnet. It was nearly dark, so Mrs. Galliers walked down the hill with me, and we found William busy, but very hot and breathless; he had found the horses near Bell's farm, two or three miles off. The fire was going merrily. William had set on some manioc (of which root tapioca is made) to roast for dinner. The rice I had made ready, and it was soon on, and we prepared to dine off cold salt beef. At half-past seven Bonnet appeared, excusing himself for stopping half-way to rest, it was such a heavy load. A steak was soon fried, and we enjoyed our dinner, but not before we were ready for it.

About this time we killed one of our pigs, and very naturally sent our dear old neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, a piece of pork. She replied thus:—

"MY DEAR MRS. FEILDEN,—Many things prevented me last evening from duly acknowledging your very kind present, which set my mouth watering, and I longed to be 'at it.' So this morning I prepared for a feast; but Elijah had a fit, and if Mrs. Galliers had not made her appearance about twelve I should have been put about sadly. He did light a fire, and fired away at the same time with lofty boastings, but was humbler when he saw I could do without him—a Radical!

"But how glorious your pig must have been! really I have not seen such since I came from the land of hams (even Herefordshire), and it was quite delicious eating. Thanks, many thanks for it, and not for it alone—oh, no! I am sorry to hear Mr. Feilden does not improve so fast and so entirely as we could wish, and consequently that many unusual cares must devolve on you, my dear, kind friend. I do pray very fervently to be strengthened and supported, for I have no one to help or overmuch care for me. Never mind! it is only 'the beginning of the end.' The violent winds distress me, and snakes continue to pay unwished-for visits. Elijah killed a most lovely and large green one this morning in the storeroom, so beautiful; I wish to put him in a bottle, but E. is a barbarian, and does his work like a savage. There was no beauty left, so he went to the bush.

"I read and read again about 'More Worlds than One,' not doubting the probability, and rather wishing to feel a certainty, that I may meet my lost ones in Jupiter, Mars, or Venus; but regretting that pagan names were accorded to them by Christian men. I cannot help thinking that—

"'Books of knowledge crowd our shelves,
Men know all things but themselves.'

"Mrs. Galliers is impatient, so I must conclude.

"M. BOWEN."

On September 1st, she writes:—

"I feel very much comforted by your most kind and friendly attentions to me, and even fancy that I am less lonely and desolate. Indeed, it is not mere fancy, but a cheering reality, to find myself worthy of kind thoughts from estimable minds, when words and looks are emanations of a sympathizing heart. Time flies, and I wish to notice your observations on the books, reading and read, in which treasures of wisdom (human) and learning you allow me to participate; but I must again aver that I do not feel competent to judge on such weighty matters, and have neither talent nor inclination for controversy. Now it appears to me that Sir David loves it to his heart's deepest centre; and, consequently, with regard to my poor unsophisticated mind, he succeeds to confuse and confound rather than to convince, to silence but not satisfy, to awaken lofty thoughts (if there were not already such exalted ideas of the great Creator as no words of man could imbue the soul with), but not sufficiently bring to view the *one grand event* on which alone a sinner can find rest from weary and painful forebodings, and peace—that peace which the world can never give—to his soul. Jesus! Emanuel! is the only name that is sweet and powerful enough to do this. Although I have read nearly every chapter three times over, I still rise from the perusal fasting! It is not a feast to my taste.

"I was busy with it last night, and am ashamed to say that very trifling and silly thoughts started up every

moment (I hope not evil ones). I thought of Peter Pindar—whose amusing stories of George and Charlotte delighted my childhood—the astronomer, seeing an elephant in the moon, and ultimately discovering it to be only an imprisoned fly in his telescope! Again I took flight in the air balloon to talk with the philosopher in the island of Laputa (*vide* Gulliver) and offer my thumb to be measured for a suit of clothes; but alas! the visit was fruitless—all the flappers were absent, and not even a tailor could understand or even hear you without one. I am thankful to descend in safety. I find that at least all are not required to take such wonderful flights into unknown regions; that the paths of duty are not only humbler, safer, and pleasanter to the generality, but also more easily found than the doings and sayings of other worlds. Our adoration and love need not such stimulants. Give me the songs of the night and the day, and leave the plurality of worlds (of which I do not doubt) to be an open subject for philosophic squabbling, argument, and counter argument, only hoping that their Christian duties are equally and more usefully attended to. I fear this is wearisome to an intolerable degree. I have something better as a delicacy to mention—I just tasted the nice composition you sent me this morning, very similar to what I call brawn. I dare not indulge very freely, but it will be a *bonne bouche* for many a day.

"You will be surprised to hear that I hope to be in church to-morrow; it is sacrament day. I am to have a seat in Mrs. Forrest's cart, but must meet it at the top of my opposite road at half after nine, and shall probably have to wade through the sands to the church. I hope and must pray for strength according to my need, which must be considerable. My little bed will be most welcome at night, if permitted to return to it; but oh! the joy of feasting at my Lord's table will amply repay any exertion I can make. So, begging you to add your prayers to mine, and offering as much love and true regard as heart can proffer and hold, I remain, yours, &c.,

"M. BOWEN."

This letter determined Mr. Feilden to send our *only* horse to take the old lady to meet the cart "at the top of the opposite road," and on its return I mounted and rode into Durban, and sat beside her at church.

On the 4th of September she wrote to me:—

"I do feel quite unwell, not at all in consequence of my visit to Durban—for that was balm of Gilead to mind, body, and, I hope, soul also. I did feel so calm, so thankful, and so happy, even through the midnight hours, that it must have been a blessed hope—dare I say assu ance?—that my Lord vouchsafed to meet me at His own table, and allowed me to share the precious feast He there provides for them who love Him faithfully. It did indeed make my heart glow within me when I discovered the dear friend kneeling beside me. Oh! my dear Mrs. Feilden, only to think, if we rejoice so much to accompany those we love to our Lord's table on earth, with all the imperfections, trials, and annoyances which must ever attend our thoughts, words, and actions, till this mortal shall put on immortality, what words can express, or indeed what heart conceive, the blessedness of that participation we hope for in the Presence where there is 'fulness of joy for evermore?'

"*September 5th.*—Thus far had I written when the storm began, and I was glad to be perfectly quiescent. I could do nothing, but the chief cause of my uncomfortable sensations was explained—electricity was doing its usual work with me, so I went to bed before eight. The thunder and the awful wind shook my little couch like an earthquake, and I hoped for a supply of water; I do not find any in my tanks this morning, but it looks promising. I shall rejoice to learn that Mr. Feilden is better; perhaps he too suffers from atmospheric influences. But, alas! we must expect a good deal of such weather, preceded by equinoctial gales. I imagine all the coast of Africa may be denominated 'the Cape of Storms.' Nevertheless, we know that no lands are exempt, and we know also and thankfully acknowledge that the storm hurts not without the Lord's per-

mission and direction. Safety comes from Him alone, and my sure and well-founded trust has ever been placed thus, and has never been disappointed.

"My watch says it is eleven. The *Syren* sailed about a quarter of an hour ago. I saw her moving, but had something else to do than stand idly watching her. She might have been at the Cape before now, but our good hopes are blown over the 'Bluff' most unmercifully, as far as human means are concerned. Elijah is very civil to-day, but I am confident it is only under the impression that I cannot do without him, and must come to his terms. *I won't*—if I *can help it*. Do I not write as if the storm was still about me, and rendering me a nuisance, or very like it?"

On leaving the church, after receiving the sacrament beside Mrs. Bowen, I saw her set out homewards in the cart, and found William very happy, with my horse, coming for me. I turned into Mrs. Collins' house to put on my habit skirt, which was all the dressing I required. I wrote to Mrs. Bowen a few days after:—

"Mrs. Collins begged I would tell you how happy she would have been had you gone to her house. I said I should ride behind the cart, and give her message, but not finding the cart as I expected at the Congregational Chapel, I concluded the oxen (which started so well) had got on towards the bush, and not finding you there, neither before nor behind on the sands, I felt at a loss till William said the oxen could not be such fast walkers as the horse, and that you must have turned into another street and stopped. I was very glad to hear you felt even better for your ride. The change would do you good, but that was a tremendous hill to get down at the end of your day. It was there that Miss James was upset in Boultbee's van. I rode through our bush path with great pleasure, shaded by the trees, inhaling the delicious perfume from the various shrubs and flowers. The sweet white bell, called gardenia, was in almost full flower, but the woodcutters have had no compassion, for one half of them seem to be cut away. Last year the path was worth a good

long ride on purpose to see them, and to smell their sweet perfume.

"Your beautiful roses made the mulberry leaves look like a basket from the greenhouse. They are blooming in a glass to-day, but the silkworms have consumed the mulberry leaves. I don't know if it is the superiority of your leaves, but our silkworms turned out again to eat when we thought them ready to spin, and they devoured a great quantity. It is curious to watch their mouths going so fast and so neatly through the leaves. A few are forming their cocoons, but we have all ages. The worms come out every day, and, as they ought not to be mixed together, they are a considerable trouble to attend to. We must manage better when we get billions and trillions!"

September 8th.—At the time of the Crimean war, letters between England and Natal were often four or five months in reaching their destination. One I received had been despatched seven months before it reached me; another, five months! Of course we had many disappointments, and my husband became disheartened. He had not calculated on taking me to such a life of labour, neither had I counted on the kind of life I went through. I had looked for a sort of Abrahamic life, with flocks and herds, field and garden produce, a comfortable farmhouse, &c., &c.; in short, a simple working life and easy style, with all things requisite about us. I did not count on the tiger taking all our fowls and calves; the hawk, our chickens; the something else burrowing under the iron house and devouring our pigeons; and the wild pigs ploughing up our vegetables; and no respectable female servant to be had to help me in the house. Nor did my simplicity count upon all the traps set for my husband by cunning men to make him run risks in various promising schemes, till he became quite poor. Still, we lived very pleasantly and comfortably, compared with many of our neighbours. Our little wooden dwelling was clean and cheerful; our table always liberally supplied, with enough for a chance visitor; the situation

of the house was really beautiful, and the atmosphere so pure and fresh that the spirits were raised in spite of oneself. I find myself writing to a dear sister at this time :—

"My health is now quite restored, though the glass tells one some plain truths, and when I put on your lovely little bonnet and mantle, I look with far more complacency on the latter than the former, for it wants a younger face below. I think you would find Leyland looking a good deal older, and with a more anxious, careworn expression, the moment his features repose."

CHAPTER XXV.

I MEANT to have described our bed-room, for it is a curiosity in its way. When Mrs. Miller saw it she exclaimed, "This is like a ship's cabin." It is more like a storeroom, with shelves on three sides, filled with jars, bottles, boxes, books, a retreat for hanging dresses, &c., &c. The iron bedstead has its head against one side of shelves without a curtain, for our house being of wood, muslin curtains would not be safe, and the climate does not require thicker ones. The door into the garden is opposite the foot of the bed; on each side are a number of tacks, on which hang shoes, spurs, gaiters, and various other odd articles. Behind the door is my husband's washstand. Under the book-shelves, his tiny chest of drawers filled with sundry useful implements; his tool-chest on the other side of the door, against which opens the door into our living apartment. Two chests of drawers, with my washstand, and a couple of tin boxes filled with clothes, pretty nearly fill a room of twelve feet square. Above the door are some elephants' tails. A sword, a gun, an assegai, and revolver case form the ornaments round about, and ready at hand, for a shot at a tiger or other disturber of the peace in the night. There are no fewer than three looking-glasses in the room.

Mrs. Smith and four of her family have been with us for a few days. The boys are always useful and active, and Mrs. Smith is curing our bacon and hams. We asked her to bring Margaret, who was only too glad to come, and her own little child Pollie, of course. The two little girls play with Mrs. Galliers' children, Margaret making herself most useful with her needle.

Mrs. Galliers has just had a letter from her husband, to say that he is on his way home from Australia, and that he has paid away most of the gold he got, found, or made, in passages and house-rent; but still has enough left to bring him home and help him afterwards, besides lots of nice things for them all. So he has seen the world at small cost. He did not wish to stay in Australia, and disliked Melbourne. He was at Ballarat and some other diggings, and found gold; but there was an insurrection among the people against the Government, when forty of the rioters were shot, so Galliers left them. He returned by Mauritius, and describes the vegetation as finer than anything he had seen. Not finding a ship for Natal, he passed within sight of it, and landed at Algoa Bay, where he now waits for a vessel to bring him to Durban, getting 6*s.* 6*d.* a day by working at his trade. His poor wife was quite excited by the news; she came running down the hill to let me read the letter. Here I must relate one of the nicest traits of sympathy I have met with in a Caffre. Mrs. Galliers sent her Caffre boy to the post-office, and told him she expected a letter from her husband, and, if there was one, to run back as fast as he could. The poor fellow did so, and when he came in sight of her cottage he put the letter on the top of a stick, and held it aloft, for her to see long before he reached home.

My Caffre, Bonnet, knocked a hole in his shin by a fall lately. It became so bad from a second knock, that we had to poultice, bandage, and dress it with "Brickhill's lotion," fearing proud flesh. It is getting well, and the lad seems sensible of the attention and care he received.

These Caffres are a queer set. The little ox-herd told Mrs. Smith to-day that she and Smith were servants, and so was he himself, but his *father* was *not* a servant. This is the second instance that has come to my ears in which our servants have been told this. The Caffres are really more free than Englishmen. I think our government over them is rotten at the foundation. It fosters polygamy for the sake of the increase of hut-tax, since

each wife must have a separate hut. It professes to govern the Caffres by their own laws, but they are refugees, and our Government, in affording them protection, might easily prohibit what we consider a sin. It might be made one of the conditions of protection; but then the hut-tax would fall, and perhaps it might also stop refugees from leaving their own country and chiefs so numerously. The chiefs complain dreadfully, I am told, of their people running from them.

It is too early to speak of the bishop's works. He has begun by giving offence, and many think he has some lessons yet to learn. He is commencing largely on a settled plan, and laying out his means upon it—prematurely, it is thought—before he has sufficiently studied and become acquainted with the nature of his sturdy people. I hear he is to have a cotton-gin sent out. If he can make the Caffres pick cotton, it will be more than any one yet has accomplished. The sugar-cane, which they love, does not keep them all steady, and they abominate picking cotton. Moreover, it is not thought that cotton-growing will succeed in Natal. The crop does not ripen, as in other countries, for a regular harvest of a few days or weeks, but keeps constantly going on, and causes a continual picking over all the fields for months, and that not abundantly at the same time. Then, probably, rain falls and spoils it. The Caffres will not work for a master unless they like him.

Byrne's scheme, and the Caffre war (which was at least 500 miles distant) played the very mischief with Natal. The place is kept as poor as a starved rat for want of immigrants, but it is working its way "hup" as Wagland used to say, and the vessel in which Mr. Proudfoot sailed lately took away 10,000*l.* worth of Natal produce The wool trade is increasing, and what did not that do for Australia?

Mrs. Smith is platting for me a new riding-hat, of the palm leaf. It is to have a very wide brim, and there is to be an alteration from my last hat, that she tells me she will not make for any one else, in order that my hat

may not become common, because she does not think servants should wear exactly the same as their masters. I am going to trim it, and line the brim with one of the handsome ribbons which came from Scotland in that wonderful box of pretty things. I was troubled on seeing so many rich and costly gifts to myself, but it was very sweet to receive such proofs of affection.

I am surprised to find how long my winter dress has been agreeable to wear this year. It has been the longest and coldest winter Natal has known for years. My sister had slipped a pair of cork soles into a basket of useful odds and ends for our voyage out. I thought the cork soles would never be required here, but this winter I have been glad of them, and also of my pretty green slippers, which would scarcely stay on my feet without them.

We heard a dreadful story this week. A Caffre has been taken by a tiger in broad daylight close to our farm on the other side of the Umbilo. The poor fellow's cries were heard—even what he said—at a craal near the place, but when the occupants summoned courage to go and look for him, they found his head stuck up in a tree, while his "blanket" (the covering the Caffres tie round them), stick (knobkerry), and mangled body were lying on the ground. Alec Smith heard this story when looking for some strayed oxen. Mrs. Smith begins to be afraid of the boys going about the fields and bush towards evenings, but it is not likely a panther would spring at a clothed person, and it is very rare to hear of their taking a man of any kind. The bare legs and strong smell would make a Caffre more of game. I feel quite safe in my bush home, but of course I do not go into the bush alone.

We have been much interested reading the accounts of the Crimean war, and the repulse of the Allies after the French had chosen their new General, Pelissier; he seems to have been rash and headstrong. And poor Lord Raglan is gone! Pelissier wished to be a Napoleon Buonaparte, and could not. The check was perhaps timely; but, oh, what a fearful war this is! and no sound

of its conclusion. "In the latter days shall come wars, and rumours of wars."

September 15th.—A report has just reached us that Sebastopol is taken, but that the Russians in retiring sprang a mine, which buried 18,000 of the Allies. It seems not so unlikely to be true. The papers think Austria will prove treacherous. Jane, who lives in that country, has the most perfect confidence in her integrity, and praises her guardedness in making all ready before she ventures to join openly. It is a dreadful war. What incalculable trouble it is working! What sore hearts! Trade, too, will suffer, and there was no need of that.

We are experimenting on silkworms just now as an amusement. We have above 5,000 of all ages, and more coming out daily. They thrive admirably, if well taken care of, being fully as large and strong as those we saw in Italy. The mulberry grows to perfection. We think that if people would have the patient perseverance silkworms require in constant attendance, cleaning, and feeding, Natal might produce any quantity of silk. We have been successful so far. Next year we may have a whole crop of worms, in which case we must contrive to hatch all the eggs at the same time to save labour. This has to be done in other countries. In China they have apparently as much difficulty in preventing the eggs hatching too soon, as I anticipate we shall find in hatching them all at once. As the silkworm never wanders from its place, we place them on paper trays along one end of the room, the juniors in smaller trays on a side table. Our room begins to be crowded. If we pursue the sport much further we must build a long room on purpose for them. We are planting mulberry cuttings largely; but this year, after using most of our own leaves, we send daily to get leaves from Mrs. Bowen, whose trees are five years old, and the leaves magnificent, as large as two hands spread out with a point at the end of the fingers. It is curious to watch the silkworm devouring them.

Our pine-apples grow well, and the garden is rarely

quite without some in fruit, even in winter. We rode into Durban to make two calls, my husband putting two pine-apples in his pockets for the two ladies, one of which would have brought thirty shillings in an English market, the other scarcely inferior. The ride to and from Durban was very refreshing. We put up our horses, and while my husband attended to business I sat with Mrs. Collins, and nearly made a blouse for one of her little boys. We had gone round by Mrs. Bowen's house, as she wanted my husband's witness to her signature. She was in low spirits, having heard of the death of her dear friend and brother-in-law in Carmarthenshire, but she said, "As I have sown, so must I reap!" Poor solitary old lady!

The rain storms in Natal are very sudden and heavy while they last. A thunder-shower will be terrible for half an hour in summer, leaving no trace behind it in another half hour, except the refreshing of the ground and air. The houses in the country were all so slightly built and thatched, that the rain frequently penetrated the roofs and sides of a dwelling, creating a general rush to save books or other articles from being injured. Old Mrs. Bowen and I exchanged our lamentations now and then; hers were always made in a ludicrous way, for I believe she derived amusement even from her troubles. We could both of us laugh over our petty vexations. Thus she writes on September 30th:—

"From one cause or another, last week proved almost too exciting and fatiguing, and the many uncomfortable feelings of those days have left their tokens unmistakably. I have frequently complained of the stormy winds, and now my cry is, Oh! this rain! this rain! Truly, if you could see the desolation caused thereby to poor helpless me, you would not wonder, for my kitchen is afloat, and my paths are mere watercourses. Enough said! I only hope to hear that it has not been so bad with you, my dear friend.

"My first view yesterday was not cheering. There were thirty great oxen doing duty with more satisfaction to themselves than to me; they divided, causing Elijah

endless employment in the midst of rain, that left him better washed than usual. First they went south, then north, then east and west, all day. At three o'clock Elijah drove them all down, taking Mrs. Forrest's to her place. It rained heavily, and all seemed quiet, but in half an hour five beasts came close to the verandah, and I was obliged to go out and prevent further progress; I did manage to drive them down hill some little way, and returned to my work. The light was intercepted, and I saw the wide horns of a great black ox looking in at the window. I went out with a stick, and he went off with such uncouth capers as were laughable, only I was not in the humour to laugh. I resumed my employment, and was again made the subject of observation by a great red beast. Again I took my stick, and was treated with a variety of footings, neither graceful nor agreeable. They had only gone a little out of my sight and taken a tour round my garden, and then came politely to tell me all about it. I fear there is more rain brewing for us. I prefer stronger beverage, but should not wish to be drowned even in a butt of Malmsey." [Alluding to my remark that rain-water was as Malmsey to us, so precious did we feel it.]

"I begin to be quite jealous of those engrossing silkworms. I would not wish to wear a silk dress, were the expense always so great. No moment to spare to give a ray of sunshine to a gloomy dwelling, or, what is equivalent, a sunny smile from soft loving eyes to cheer the lonely heart. Well, well! I must 'in patience possess my soul.' But it really is a pity my roses under the verandah should 'waste their sweetness in the desert air.'

"I blush to acknowledge that I am not *au fait* in making pastry. I fear what I now take the liberty of sending will give but a poor opinion of my talents therein. The only excuse I can offer is that I have been anxious to send you a few ripe mulberries, but the wind and the rain have united to oppose my intentions, so, out of pure spite, I gathered some in a transition state this morning and roasted them alive. I hope this ex-

planation will give you a lively zest in finding out their good or evil qualities. I am meditating a little reminiscent account of a splendid white mulberry tree which flourished sixty years ago in my native town, and from off which I gathered rich white mulberries for many a subsequent year. It had a neighbour, a purple-fruited mulberry, which far exceeded its fair rival in multitudes but not in flavour, and many a scramble have I enjoyed with light-hearted boys and girls beneath that noble tree. Alas! where are they all?

"*October 12th.*—My mulberry trees will again bear frequent pruning, so please to send when you need leaves.

"I return all the books so kindly lent me, except Doddridge, which did not come in their company and objects to be numbered with them. He is a dear, delightful, quaint old fellow whom I grow fonder of every day. I have now got Sharon-Turner's 'Anglo-Saxons,' which I guess is tough work, and moreover is not what I thought of having. I do not recognize in this any of the numerous extracts I have occasionally met with. Do you know the title of his other work or works?"

November 17th.—A case of port wine from England is announced, a present from a dear sister. It is landed, but we have not yet been able to send the cart into Durban to bring it out. We grow busier every day, and our helps fewer. Up at sunrise this morning and breakfast cleared away before six o'clock, that my husband might be early in Durban. William and the little Caffre were despatched on errands, so I have the work of the house to myself, and yet we feel more comfortable and better served without a female servant. William Smith unfortunately is untidy and forgetful, but he is only fifteen, and he is invaluable, so active, willing, and clever. His brother Alec, one year older, works in the garden chiefly and fields. Both attend to the horses, which are not groomed like English horses. The Caffres are "hewers of wood and drawers of water," and work well enough under a master's eye. Some of them clean the pans nicely and attend to the fires. There are two little

boys, with nice intelligent faces, and a poor old refugee, who is only good for weeding. He came with lot No. 1, so he had to be taken and kept.

Sir George Grey has just left Natal after a rapid, but very busy, tour to learn its capabilities, and whether the country is worth keeping or whether it should be deserted by England. He is delighted with the colony. He says it is superior to the old colony of the Cape, and I think he included any other he has seen (he was Governor of Jamaica), and he promises to do all in his power to aid the development of its capabilities, both by importation of labour and by inducing emigration amongst the right sort. There had been quite a strife lately for or against the introduction of convict labour, storekeepers chiefly insisting that bad men would be better than none, because they would bring soldiers and thus increase consumption, &c. Some of us who are settled in the bush (with so many facilities for escape as convicts would have here), thought we should not sleep quite so soundly with our doors unlocked and our husbands perhaps absent, and that the morals of Natal would not be improved by the entrance of such a set. However, Sir George has negatived the convict system entirely, and, what is better, he has pleased both parties. There are some tough men in Durban, who will not yield one inch. The poor bishop has come in for it already by imprudent speaking. He has hurt and offended all parties, even his own advocates in the church. The fear is that he is one of the new school making a great point of Old Testament observances. He speaks of "laying the foundations of the Church of Natal." The people say that they are already laid; that there is no Church of Natal, but that ours is the Church of England in Natal. The bishop must be an earnest, good man, anxious to spend and be spent in the cause of religion, but whether or not he takes a right view of how the cause is to be best promoted remains to be proved. They say here that his words deny what his acts imply.

Little Billy Galliers has just been for his daily lesson.

It is a treat to the child to be allowed to come, and, though but in a very small way, it may be the means of instilling in him a few useful principles for his after life. Children never forget their first teachers, however much they may depart from their rules.

Yesterday I rode over early on old "Fox," with William for a guard of honour, to sympathize with Mrs. Bowen in her present difficulties and her lately increased feeling of isolation. She has almost determined to go to England, or rather, to Wales, to her husband's sister-in-law, lately made a widow. She must sell her property here first. It is a great journey and voyage for a lady near eighty to undertake by herself. She has arrangements to make before leaving, and "the bones of her dear son" to be moved from her garden to the cemetery. Still, she says she would not fear the undertaking, if only some respectable person should be going at the same time, to whom she might feel she in a manner belonged. She "would require but little in the way of assistance," she has been "so accustomed to manage for herself." She thinks she would "die better in England," and if she should be called before she gets there, "she knows in whom she has believed and trusted." I feel very much for her. Her man-servant wants to go with her, but she says he would tyrannize over her fearfully, and only be useful when in humour. She said to me, "You have no idea how he tyrannizes over me, for he knows that if he leaves me I can't get another." I can see it is so. She, with her strong will, that I can believe has ruled everything, has quite succumbed to the will of a young man of twenty-three or twenty-four years, insolent at one time, idle at another, and very pleasant and useful when he is in the humour, riding about at his pleasure, and doing just as much or as little work as he chooses. What a sad picture. She said to me, "There are just two persons on this side the Atlantic that I love, yourself and Miss H. She is a good creature, a truly good woman. She is always going about doing good, nursing sick people, and helping in various ways. She helps

me very much, she does so many things for me. She is a good Christian woman!"

I said laughingly, "Ah! Mrs. Bowen, I do nothing for you." She replied so earnestly, "You don't know all the good you do me, you feed both my mind and my soul, you do more good than you know of." I felt so grateful to God for these words, both as comfort to myself with my seemingly small talent, so hindered as that is at every turn by my deafness; and because in all my intercourse with Mrs. Bowen, I have known so well her infirmity of temper and impatience, that I have always had the calming of that in my mind, both in conversation and in our frequent exchange of notes. I left her much cheered, and hope some good opening will occur for her to go home, where she has wealthy relations who can at least see that she wants nothing. Here she is truly alone in the world, struggling with real vexations, though such is her nature that she would scarcely be happy if she had nothing to struggle with. She never wavers in her hope and faith in her Saviour, and knows that all will finally be well. I marvel at her keenness in earthly *trifles*, really trifles, but it is her nature, and the leopard cannot change his spots. I shall miss her if she leaves Natal.

November 17th.—Our new kitchen will be slated in a fortnight. It will add materially to our comfort, and it is astonishing how long we have managed without one; how we have existed in the culinary department, cooking on the ground of the iron house; or in the open air fenced round with reeds, which last we much preferred in dry weather, as being open to the sky for the smoke to ascend. Truly it was roughing it in the bush.

"Our kitchen," as we shall always call it, will be quite a snug house in itself; consisting of four rooms and sundry closets for pantries, dressing-rooms, and store-room, these last being gained by walling in the deep sloping verandah roof, which extra walls give greater security to the whole building. We shall make one room our own bed room, and there are two nice rooms

up-stairs. There is a master builder with two or three assistants, who, by dint of watching work pretty well, get seven or eight shillings a day, and if they arrive late in the morning, they do not stop to make up the time in the evening. We have put the cottage at their service to eat and sleep in ; but, having wives, they choose to go home on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The joiner and his son ride backwards and forwards every day, bringing their dogs with them. They go home at half-past four, because they live over the Berea, a distance of six or seven miles. It is fine times for them, and I dare say they do not wish that more workpeople should come to Natal, but it is to be hoped there are good times coming for the country.

Sir George Grey was astonished at the growth and quantity of sugar-cane planted at Springfield ; he said it was better than anything he had seen in Jamaica, and that he would put 600 Caffres at the service of the Springfield estate, if so many are required. We hope four bags of our first-fruits have arrived in England, to be pronounced upon.

Our silkworms have taken up a great deal of time lately. Ours is but an amateur affair, but it grows rapidly, and becomes very exacting. There are some thousands of worms, fine, large, and healthy ; but we have not enough mulberry leaves to feed so many. We beg from our neighbours and send to the public gardens, a long distance. The leaves shrivel under the hot sun in being carried ; then we must keep them fresh in water, and they must be quite dry when given to the silkworms ; so that these pretty little industrious creatures oblige us to be industrious too. They are a great plague ; their paper trays are along the walls, and in every unoccupied corner of the room, making the place look like a manufactory, as a gentleman on entering remarked. They feel the changes of weather. We had a severe thunderstorm one afternoon ; the house shook and groaned, and the lightning flashed in vivid strokes from every quarter, now a deep brilliant pink or rose colour, and again yellow or white. The poor silkworms

felt the storm acutely. They seemed paralyzed, and those ready to spin were ruined, shrinking and shrivelling into half their size. After this came a fortnight of raw, cold, damp weather, and the worms did not thrive so well; they spun in due time, but were small, and their cocoons not so full. Again warm weather came for a week, and the worms grew amazingly. They seem hardly to have the instinct to move themselves, unless the leaf they are on is quite dead, and the fresh one immediately over them. If pursued on a large scale, artificial means must be resorted to, as in India, to get all the eggs hatched at the same time, which would materially lessen the labour, for that is excessive and exhausting. I have been busy with their wants four, five, or six hours daily. The cocoons are very pretty, and it is interesting to watch the internal spinning; but I am quite tired of attending to them, and we have already more worms than leaves for them. We shall not have leaves enough for the eggs we have ready for next season.

We have had two Caffres running over the country for the last ten days, in search of two horses that have strayed. One is found at last, but the other is still missing.

Our garden begins to look beautiful. The granadillas are ripening in great abundance. We must get rid of the workpeople soon, or, I fear, we shall get little of the fruit. Our figs are beginning to ripen, and smell deliciously. The monkeys, I fear, will be at our mealie cobs to-night. I saw a number of them amusing themselves in the trees to-day, keeping watch, I suppose, over their expected feast. Oxen get in among the oats, monkeys in the mealies (or Indian-corn), poultry in the vegetables, tigers in the poultry, and men in the fruit. A nice garden truly!

My husband won a brace of pistols lately in a shooting match. They were given by Mr. Milner, or Captain Milner, who commands the Royal Durban Rangers, during the absence of their captain (Proudfoot) and colonel (the Governor) in England. Mrs. Milner wants me to help her to work colours for the corps. The

other ladies will share in the presentation, but they rather back out from the work. The design is to be the Durban arms under the arms of England.

There is a sad stir in Durban just now, about the bishop and the church. Yesterday an opposition box was held at the church-door for collecting alms. The archdeacon insisted on the offertory being made from seat to seat, but the people neglected this one, and put extra into that at the door. Bishop, archdeacon, and churchwardens are all at loggerheads. The archdeacon locked the church-door, and would not allow a vestry meeting to be held inside ; the wardens took down one of the calico windows, walked in, and carried their meeting. The new clergy wish to carry all with a high hand, and some disgraceful scenes are enacted in the town. Some boys have burnt the bishop in effigy, and he foolishly in court accused a lawyer and a merchant of aiding and abetting, and has been obliged to retract and apologise.

The bishop has had trouble too in his own household. The nurse, who was to be such a "treasure," has married, and, on being expostulated with, said she did not know there would be white men here! The governess has to be sent home again ; they think she is not quite right in her head. She was sent to Durban in charge of Miss Barter, that singular lady who has been living amongst the Caffres with a view to Christianize them, sleeping on a mat in a hut, and undergoing various voluntary privations. Her health, however, will not hold out, and she returns to England with the poor governess. A day or two ago, a struggle was witnessed in the street, Miss Barter, bonnetless, trying to pull Miss B—— from a post, to which she clung. Some decent men interfered, and brought a charge of assault against Miss Barter, who probably thought she must not lose sight of her charge and only did her duty, but it is painful to think of such scenes being enacted in the place. The girl thinks she is being sent home in disgrace ; the bishop says he will be responsible to her friends, being in the place of a parent to her.

About this time our mail steamer was delayed sailing, it was said, owing to the antics of a lady passenger, who was up the mast one day, and otherwise rendered herself so disagreeable to the rest of the passengers that they said they would not have her on board. My old neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, hearing this, wrote to me :—

"If the detention of the *Lady of the Lake* is really caused by Mrs. N., I am almost tempted to wish she might be made to undergo the punishment given in a Welsh town thirty or thirty-five years ago. There was a linendraper, well to do in the world, but tormented by a young, beautiful, and termagent wife. He took to hard drinking, and she not unfrequently boxed his ears, and, it was said, fairly beat him out of bed. The mobocracy became aware of it, and carried an effigy of the offender on a wooden horse through the town, with the music of fire-shovels, marrow-bones, and cleavers, &c., and she sat with her face to the crupper. The cry all the time was, 'A Ooden Orse for the 'Ooman!' (the lower Welsh of that day repudiated the W). The lady who climbs the mast with oaths and blows, deserves the 'Ooden Orse.'"

CHAPTER XXVI.

January 4th, 1856.—With the thermometer at 80° in a cool house, and at 90° in those at Durban, it is difficult to realize either Christmas or winter; but this year we have made wonderful efforts, and have drank "absent friends," and thought of home. The Collins's all came out to us on Christmas Day, and we dined with them quietly on New Year's Day. Ours was quite a party; we had Mr. Cope and Mr. Kock, old Mrs. Bowen, and the Scotch minister from Pietermaritzberg, who came with the Collins' family. After many troubles and difficulties were got over on her side, Mrs. Bowen found spirit to mount the horse we sent for her, and she proved the life almost of the party. She thoroughly enjoyed herself, chatting in the most lively manner. She has since told me that it was an immense relief to find herself so flatteringly and pleasantly received by all, and to get a moment's relief to her mind from the pottering little annoyances she has of late lived amongst, and which bid fair to sting her to death, like a nest of hornets.

We are looking forward with pleasure to the enjoyment of a little greater earthly comfort very shortly. Our new kitchen bids fair to be ready for use soon. It has grown into such a compact little house that I think we shall more than half live in it, and if the kitchen-range prove as comfortable as it looks, I shall be tempted to do a good deal more cooking than hitherto. There are a boiler, an oven, a large open fireplace for a wood fire, besides a stove, which is quite a supernumerary, and I incline to think we shall do better without it.

The Sunday after New Year's Day, we rode to a

small church about four miles off, in a lovely situation. Mr. Lloyd, our former Durban clergyman (the colonial chaplain), preaches alternately in this and three or four other country places. "Clairmont" is a neat little room lined with white calico, and filled with wooden benches. The reading-desk and pulpit are rudely formed from a tree, with a bit of blue stuff for a cover and curtain. We had the communion ; a form was pushed forward, and a cushion placed in front for us to kneel upon. The little church is in a beautiful field or churchyard, with some fine old trees in it. Twenty or thirty people formed the congregation, most of whom stayed to partake of the communion. The ground and building were given by a gentleman who lives close by, where he is beginning to grow coffee, &c. He took us through his garden and fields of plantation, and seems so much in earnest that I hope he will not be stopped for want of labourers or means, to carry out his plans.

The Government system of Caffre management has been very bad hitherto. The Caffre gets his month's wage, tells you he is going to his craal for an indefinite period, and leaves you at a day's notice ; or some one may have offered him higher wages, when you have had all the toil and trouble of teaching him to be useful, and he is gone before you know what he means. Mrs. Galliers and I have each had a Caffre decoyed away in this manner lately, just when they had become useful. I am left with only a useless old refugee, fit for nothing but weeding. Alec Smith is required at the sugar working, and so we have only William Smith—a boy of fourteen—for all purposes, out of doors and in. His little sister, Margaret, however, has come for change of air. She has been ill, but she makes herself so quietly useful as to be a little treasure. She can put her hand to anything, without waiting to be told. She makes the vegetables ready for boiling, and if a Caffre is not at hand will cook them herself. If I mix the loaf, she bakes it better than William does, who is constantly called off for other work. She is only about twelve or at most thirteen years old.

I will give an insight into our ways and doings. William and Margaret get the breakfast ready, turn out the horses, fowls, &c., &c., and sweep the floor. Porridge forms their own breakfast, and I begin mine with a small plateful and treacle. Then we have coffee, eggs, and cold meat, and any vegetable, if a suitable one was left for warming up. This morning we had beans and bacon; eggs are scarce, so we did not indulge, but we had a large pine-apple, and the two children had another. We shall lunch chiefly off pine-apple. There are nearly a hundred lying under the table, and no market for them, alas! They are too ripe to send to the Cape. Soup and vegetables will form the chief of our dinner. We do not care much for beef this very hot weather, it will not keep well. I remember laughing at the West Indian girls at school talking of the delights of calabash; we are both prepared to uphold its excellence now. It is not unlike vegetable marrow, makes delicate eating, and is very sweet. Young mealie cobs are so good, that I have wondered if my sister in the Vorarlberg has never found out their worth; Indian-corn grows there. Then we use pumpkin-tops as "greens." Sweet potatoes grow well, and are good, but our English potato does not thrive well so near the coast.

After breakfast, I make our own bed and attend to the room generally; but, as we have no fine furniture or ornaments, very little dusting serves, and the weather is too oppressive for me to overtask my poor feet by over-cleaning. My ankles have never recovered strength after my last illness. The dewdrops form on the upper lip, and I am glad to be quiet during the heat of the day; but in the cool mornings and evenings, I am light and active as usual. Our Sunday's ride of only four or five miles, and the walk through Mr. Thomson's grounds, knocked me up for two days.

We called on Mrs. Bowen on our way home; she was looking for us, and gave us each a glass of port wine which did us good. The hill down to the valley leading to her place "Keventrenfa," is fearfully steep. It was

there poor Miss James was upset in the van, and I only wonder more people are not upset there. Before our bush path was cut this was our only road into Durban.

The bishop's despotic conduct has put us all in a panic, and the Durbanites have put themselves in battle array against him. I fear he is imprudent and hasty in his judgment, and he has taken no pains to gain the people's hearts or goodwill, by explaining to them the causes of any trifling change he has wished to be introduced. His dealings are too despotic; neither churchwardens nor congregation are allowed to say a word. He has published a pamphlet on polygamy, that is universally condemned. I have not seen it. Contrary to the experience of all missionaries, he wishes to admit to baptism the Caffre polygamist, without requiring him to put away his wives, urging that as the connection has been entered upon in good faith and ignorance, it is hard (especially upon the women) to turn them adrift. He quotes the Old Testament in favour of his argument. At first sight it does seem hard to require the wives to be given up; but, if polygamy is sin, we are required to give up our dearest sin—to cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye. A Caffre's wife is no more than that; she is his money—not his wife. He buys her that she may work for him, and give him children to work and to sell. To possess five or six women is so much greater worldly honour and glory among the Caffres. Then if one rich man has five wives, four poorer ones have to go without, for God has not made so many women for one man. Those who are cast off would soon find husbands, and if all accounts are true it would be no degradation to them to be so cast off, and it would be much better for the men to be forced to activity and labour. Besides which, the system is found to be the greatest hindrance to their civilization and Christianizing; it works ill in many ways. The bishop's publishing a doubt upon the question will do harm. The Caffres begin to argue the question themselves, because the bishop's doctrine is different from what the other missionaries have told them. The bishop, having

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had no working experience, should have made more inquiries among older missionaries before he went such great lengths. He has probably formed a model scheme in his own mind, and is resolved to carry it out, and prove how it works. He is an earnest man in his cause, but he may be mistaken in his manner of carrying it out, and so I think he is. He expects all money that is given to be placed on the altar in the form of an offertory, and he claims the entire and undisputed disposal of it, whether for poor, for stipends, for decorations, or for church building. This is the grand cause of struggle just now. The people say they do not know whether their money goes to the poor, or merely to buy a better dinner for the clergyman. Our bishop is an experimentalist, and not over-informed in the histories and workings of Caffre marriages. If a man had to give up four of his five wives, he would require the fathers of the women to restore to him the cows he paid for them, and I am told that to nine out of ten of such women it would be a matter of indifference. The first woman only can be truly a wife, the others are concubines. The bishop argues that the Old Testament admitted the system, but he nevertheless condemns polygamy, and would not allow it to be entered upon after baptism. He is shortsighted in this; they might delay becoming converts till it was convenient. In the Church disputes the bishop thinks he is undergoing persecution for Christ's sake; I think it is for form's sake; some might think even for the world's sake.

In a published letter he represents the Durban church to have been raised principally by himself and the Bishop of Cape Town, at an expense of 1100*l.* out of Church funds entrusted to their charge, beyond any sums contributed by Durban; whereas 100*l.* was contributed before he was appointed, by the Christian Knowledge Society; 822*l.* was raised by the Durbanites and their influence, and 300*l.* or 400*l.* more is still required to complete the church. It was unwise, to say the least of it, to claim all the honour and glory. I believe he made a large loan from funds entrusted to

him, to be repaid by pew rents. This loan he took upon himself when he took over the church into his own hands, and abolished pew rents, instituting instead the weekly offertory. I do not think either he or they have conducted their argument in a meek spirit.

Another source of excitement just now is the total wreck of the *Annabella*, which brought the mail. After remaining at outer anchorage for a few days, she struck on a sandbank in crossing the bar and stranded. There was said to be sufficient depth of water on the bar at the time. Such of her cargo as could be saved is being sold by auction, damaged or not. The storekeepers seemed to have their year's stock in her, and many will lose by this accident. I hope it will not injure the character of our port. The bay is beautiful when once the bar is crossed, almost embraced by the arms of the Berea.

Another source of annoyance, is the manner in which my husband has been victimized by Mr. M., with whom he had entered into agreement about the crushing of his sugar-canes. My husband writes :—

"The sugar is likely to turn out well; the fifteen acres M. crushed of mine produced upwards of 1100*l.*, but by agreement he was to have one-third of the sugar and all the molasses. In consequence, he made nearly all into syrup, which he reboiled, and cleared about 600*l.* for what he calls molasses sugar, leaving only 480*l.* for firsts, of which he claims one-third! So that, after having all the expense of growing and carting to the mill, I get put off with about 300*l.* He was unable to fulfil his engagement, and left five or six acres uncrushed, for which I claimed damages. He offered 60*l.* and take the cane, I claimed 105*l.* and to keep the cane. He proposed arbitration, and I consented, when he put the matter off till he made a fresh arrangement, by which I now have the mill, &c., along with a few more, to work ourselves. He delayed the matter in dispute until 120*l.* was due to him for rent, and he now sues me for that amount, refusing all compensation. I am going to try if I cannot recover, not merely damages, but for

the seconds of sugar of which I claim two-thirds. 'MacCulloch & Poole' say, molasses are the uncrystalizable portion that proceeds from the boiling the cane juice. I seem marked out to be victimised. I am now crushing the five acres left by M. last season, and of course there is a great portion lost, besides the delay of the ratoons. It is, however, making beautiful sugar, superior to any we have yet made. I was offered 30*s.* a cwt. yesterday; 35*s.* is our price. There is very little sugar in the colony, and I shall not be surprised to see it up to 40*s.* My plantation at Springfield is in beautiful order; 130 acres all in cane in different stages of growth. I shall finish my last crop about Saturday next, and shall not commence again till towards June, by which time we shall have our steam-engine and distiller at work for rum.

"Silver money is scarce just now. The Caffres are paid with it, and they bury it in their craals until the hut taxes come in, when half-crown and five-shilling pieces are plentiful, only as black as the natives. Caffres are very loath to part with shillings; they prefer that coin to all others, because they can count them. They will sometimes rather take two shillings than a half-crown."

We have not yet got rid of the workpeople from our new kitchen, as we call the roomy addition to our house. They began on the 15th of October. It is all plastered and whitewashed inside, except one room which is to be papered. The whole length of the house is 33 feet 2 inches × 28 feet. We are trying concrete for our ground-floors in this new building. It does not set so quickly as we were led to expect, but we hope it will succeed; the house is shut up for awhile, to give it time to harden. Leyland finds he must rough-cast the outside, for the rain manages to work through the brick walls. Lime is not so good here as in England, and it is expensive; four shillings and sixpence a muid, or large sack full. Gravel is also dear, having to be carted from a long distance. The slates cost nearly 50*l.*; they were brought out by the bishop, but he is not ready for

them, so they were sold by Mr. L——. This new building will be a great comfort—a luxury indeed. I wonder how we have got on so long without it.

People are grumbling at the way in which Government business is managed here. The sad affairs in the Crimea set all colonial business at a standstill, except what a colony transacts for itself, and here in Natal they are not slow to avail themselves of opportunity. Only fancy a council of two, consisting of Colonial Secretary and Government Surveyor for the time being, having it in their power, through the absence or want of superiors in office, to pass and carry a measure upon education, in the very teeth of all the people in Natal. A petition for delay was entirely suppressed and ignored by the Secretary, on account of some accidental informality in sending it to himself instead of through his clerk! A second petition was also ignored, to enable them to pass their measure at once, which places the bishop (I am told) virtually and almost exclusively at the head of the educational system, in conjunction with the Roman Catholic priest, and one of the other various dissenters. No layman or other minister can utter a word, so that—good or bad—if the Queen ratify this, Natal is under despotic government, as regards the manner of teaching and Christianizing the heathen.

CHAPTER XXVII.

February 25th, 1856.—We had a most agreeable surprise on Monday last. I was preparing for dinner, expecting my husband home from Durban in half an hour, when a young man, whose face was not quite strange, presented himself. I shook hands and was going to apologize for not remembering his name, when a smile made me exclaim, "Is it Dan?" and true enough there was Daniel Whittaker, and there were two others outside, one of whom proved to be my brother Andrew—all just landed from England. We were soon very happy together, and presently my husband rode up, bringing a beefsteak in a little basket, and a towel full of fine prawns. In the town he had heard that "Mrs. Feilden's brother" was come by the *Jane Morice*, and his two nephews. He set off to seek them, having had two horses offered, and seeking for a third, as loans. Somehow he missed them, and the young men did not wait for horses. Daniel, being familiar with the place, led the way, and they walked out at once. My brother was most fortunate in getting all his packages landed. The Whittakers landed part only of theirs, as heavy weather came on, and the *Jane Morice* had to go out to sea again for some days.

The new house has been built just in time. The three gentlemen sleep in it, and we hope soon to have the full use of it. The rooms are whitewashed and neat, but the joiner pleads illness for not having yet put in doors and windows. My brother is to have one room for his own, so we have got his bed and luggage and all his boxes, &c., comfortably housed beside him, and he

and I made a screen of "wrapping" over the window. At this hot season it is sufficient protection from weather, but in a week I hope the doors and windows will be all right. Andrew is quite pleased with his room.

After a little, the two Whittakers are to occupy Gudgeon's cottage of two rooms, as their headquarters, which will let them feel independent to come and go, until they fix on their further plans. We shall be near enough to give them any help they may need. The *Jane Morice* has brought us a heap of nice things and books, presents from our very kind friends in England.

No time was lost in showing my brother over the coast, and going to visit the various sugar plantations. Leyland and he knocked themselves up daily, riding to one or other, returning each night only to rest, and set out again next morning. We took him with us to pay a promised visit to Pine Town (twelve miles from Durban), where our friends the Collins's have taken a house for a month. This enables my brother to see what the Javanese gentleman (Mr. Van Prehn) has been doing here in planting indigo.

On Friday night we were to stay with the Ashtons, and we took Andrew with us. They made us all most welcome and comfortable in their very nice house. We dined and stayed all night, and all were very pleasant; but the lady of the house had most unaccountably forgotten we were coming! When she helped me off my horse, her face wore such a troubled expression that I could not imagine what was the matter, as she most frankly said she was glad we had brought my brother. After we were made welcome and were beginning to feel comfortable, she stooped down beside my chair to confess that she had totally forgotten we were to visit them! There was nothing for it, but either to be offended at so high a compliment, or to laugh at the oddity of the thing. Of course I chose the latter, and burst into a fit of laughter, which set all right at once, telling her she might well go down on her knees to ask pardon. Mr. Ashton's house is beautifully

situated, and we can see our own over the country in the distance.

Next week my brother and husband rode to Maritzberg. They breakfasted with the bishop at his new farm, where he is bringing up a number of young Caffres, who may some day become missionaries among their own people. They were several days in Maritzberg, and then rode on to Richmond, on the Illovo, for three days, and then on to Captain Stephenson's for three more, and then returned home. On one farm they saw 800 sheep doing well. They have visited twelve sugar estates altogether.

In the interim I was left at Pine Town with Mrs. Collins and her children. We all returned to Durban in our wagon on Friday—Smith driving, with his wife and youngest child inside. Smith, who has been such a faithful servant to us and is now working at the sugar estate of Springfield, had been unwell, so he got a holiday. He and his wife lived in the wagon, outspanning close to the cottage where Mrs. Collins and I were. The wife made herself very useful in Mrs. Collins' kitchen, while her child of three years old played with Mrs. Collins' children—a fine, but unruly family, almost too strong for their mother. I made myself half nursery governess, lecturing the two eldest girls against idleness, and teaching them to sew and be good.

We were a cheery party in the wagon returning to Durban, Smith's wife and child, Mrs. Collins and all her six, and a girl who nurses baby, myself and my luggage. The children pronounced the sandwiches that I had cut "delicious." But it is a weary journey from Pine Town to Durban; five and a half hours going twelve miles on a hot day. I stayed with my friends that night, Mr. Collins riding home with me next day. But what was my amazement when I came to put on my print dress in the morning in Durban to find it very heavy. I had thrown it over the back of a chair beside my bed; it was five or six inches deep in mud. On looking behind the chair, my surprise was still greater. A mound of earth had been dug up from the

floor during the night, between two and three feet high, by white ants. To explain this, I may mention that most of the ground-floors of the houses were neither flagged nor boarded, but hardened earth.

On reaching home again after a week's absence, I found the two brothers Whittaker busily employed tailoring, cutting, and stitching on our dining-table. One had made a very creditable white coat, and the other a pair of trousers. They had made acquaintance with my dear old friend Mrs. Bowen, who had sent me a magnificent bunch of flowers, with "her best love and best flowers;" truly they were grand. The bouquet was half a yard high, spreading out on all sides.

The workpeople have delayed again; neither doors nor windows are in the new house, and we cannot yet use our kitchen. The young men sleep in the upper rooms contentedly, and have taken no cold as yet; but should rain and storms come they will be badly off.

Our own little twelve-feet bedroom in the wooden house has been our storeroom hitherto, while the room under the thatch roof held our two spare beds, all our packing-cases, odd boxes, flour, meal, and rice sacks, pumpkins, spare crockery, drying seeds, and our guests when we had any! Surely our new building was needed, but money is scarce.

In March, 1856, my husband writes to his mother about his sugar plantation at Springfield:—

"In July next we commence re-crushing; I expect to have from fifty to sixty acres or more to crush. I have 130 acres, at least, planted and coming on. The fifty acres, at two tons of sugar an acre, is 100 tons; at 20*l.* per ton it is worth 2000*l.*, but the present price is 50*l.* per ton, making it worth 5000*l.* This looks so well on paper that I fear it is too good to be realized, and that there will be some drawback or disappointment. Still, I have a fair prospect of realizing a good fortune. If it is good for us it will be so, and you may still see us again in England, occupying the station in life to which we belong; though, for my part, no amount of fortune can ever make us really happier than we now are."

March 5th.—My wanderers have not made their appearance yet. I know my brother wishes to see as much as he can, and probably they have visited the Umgeni Falls—said to be very fine—and Richmond, and so I hope that the extra shirt each carried has enabled them to be comfortable, according to the notions of this horse-travelling country, which notions my very particular brother has yet to learn. I have dinner ready for them every evening; but, as the Whittakers are with me, that makes little difference in my work. I have two bunches of beautiful and delicious grapes from kind Mrs. Bowen, which make my mouth water; but I keep them, wishing to show my brother some of the grapes of Eschol! To-day I have been sitting on a great box initiating the Caffre into washing the floor; for the scouring that took place during my absence left a few unscoured boards considerably the whiter of the two. I regularly lost my patience this morning with a stubborn old lazy Caffre, who would obey no one; I made him go his message at once, to his evident amazement. My message was to send him to Mrs. Bowen, with a note and a pine-apple, and to thank her for her grapes.

The travellers returned at last, after a ten days' ride through the country, seeing all that was to be seen of farms and improvements.

I find myself writing to my sister on March 12th:—

"The wind is blowing all my papers about. The thermometer stands at 76° in the shade. It is so hot that I have opened every window and door, and so windy and draughty that I write with my hat tied on to save my poor ears unnecessary risks. Gladly would I put it off if I dared. Leyland is writing in his newly-started little office in the new building, and Andrew is alike employed in his own room in the same new building, where he looks very cool and comfortable without either door or window, which are not yet ready to be put in; but he feels very hot now and then. Perhaps he will describe his room to Robert, to whom he is writing a long letter; but other more important subjects may occupy his pen, so I will give you a sketch. His

washstand, consisting of two boards on trestles, is on one side of the window, his table and writing materials on the other. The curtain he and I contrived is tied in the centre to let in the air, while a lovely view may be gained by peeping through the opening, over the valley with a part of the bay looking like a small lake surrounded by wooded hills. His own pretty little bed stands at the other end of the room; his boxes, boots, &c., &c., are round the room, and a couple of chairs complete the furniture. And really, though it reads very bare, it looks very cheerful, and his spirits are improving since he came. He has seen a great deal in the short time he has been in the colony, riding out early and coming home late. In Maritzberg they breakfasted with the bishop and dined with Mr. Mellor, the magistrate. They saw our friends the Fearnes, the Piggs, and our little house—the cobbler's cottage where we lived two or three months last year. At Captain Stephenson's they met with a most hospitable reception. Their horses being tired and knocked up, they stayed two or three days to recruit, and planned a shooting expedition into the interior, Mrs. Stephenson and I to be of the party. My husband said I was a "brick," and was sure to consent, and we think the party may be made out; the Stephensons in their own wagon, and we in ours. A third wagon will be required for sleeping apartment for Andrew. We ladies must superintend the culinary department and the wagons. The gentlemen will supply us through their guns with delicacies for the table. I shall be glad to see further into the interior of Natal. Captain Stephenson is a sportsman, and will be a good guide. Three months' trek, if Leyland can spare so long."

Leyland's visit to the bishop's station seems to have somewhat softened his preconceived notions, for he is sending him his cotton gin, and silkworm eggs and books on the subject, and has written a long, friendly note to the bishop to explain about them, and to request that, instead of paying for the cotton gin, he will have two of his dark pupils taught the Protestant doctrine

and the Bible, and sent out to teach their brethren hereafter of their own choice, if possible.

We have an overland post to the Cape now, a newly-established line by means of Caffres. I am told that Mr. Collins, our postmaster, has effected a great reform in the Post Office. It is on a small scale yet, and so may the more easily be remodelled and effectually superintended. Two Caffres carry the post-bag to Maritzberg, fifty-two miles, three times a week; not always the same two, of course. Two start from Durban at 4 p.m., and they must deliver their bag at 9 a.m. next day; other two return the next day, and so on. For distances more inland relays are appointed. To one place, however, there are five good-sized rivers to cross, which they must swim whenever they are too high to wade. The post was never so orderly and exact before; so far, that to the Cape, once a week, has worked well. The men are well paid and well fed. They have scarlet shirts, with a belt and a crown on, to distinguish them as her Majesty's servants. Mr. Collins thinks the scarlet dress will distinguish them afar off and be useful. I am told that when our postman gets out of the town he takes his red shirt off (as an encumbrance), and redresses himself before he enters again.

March 18th.—I have just had a call from Archdeacon Mackenzie. He came about the things Leyland has promised to the bishop, and partly, perhaps, to see how the land lay; for since the Durban disputes he has not been out, and his sister told Mrs. Ashton she had not the pleasure of my acquaintance, which a little surprised me, for we have taken no part in these quarrels, and, after a very pleasant call on herself, she accepted a frank invitation to ride out to luncheon some day and take us by chance. The archdeacon said he thought it a pity they were called Puseyites, adding that, if Romish errors were introduced into our Protestant Church, they would all join in putting them down. We had a nice, long and interesting chat upon the Church and its doctrines, and I believe we agreed that the life of God in the soul of man will make all right outside, but that no

outside adornment can bring the life of God into the soul of man. There is to be a confirmation shortly, so I named two of Smith's sons as likely to be candidates.

My journal runs off from one subject to another somewhat capriciously. In the agreeable visit the gentlemen paid to the plantations of Mr. Van Prehn, an indigo planter from Java, they were told of cheats somewhat similar to those Mr. Feilden has suffered from. Messrs. Van Prehn entered into partnership with a gentleman in Natal, advanced 2500*l.*, and were prepared with 10,000*l.* more; but they can get no account of how that sum has been expended, and Mr. Van Prehn is now at law "for the first time in his life." It is feared that, if he lose his cause through some want of technical formality in the drawing up of the partnership agreements, he will leave the colony in disgust; and all would lament such a termination, as every one sees he is morally right, and being a man of honour, a gentleman, and a planter of experience, with influence to bring others to the colony, he would be a great loss. The Javanese Government is not popular with the planters. I called on Mrs. Van Prehn when in Pine Town, and found her a ladylike, pleasant, foreign lady, with great ease of manner and conversation. She has a large, young family. I saw also another Javanese lady, in her native style of dress, a full white calico or dimity gown up to the throat, but a loose fit, tied in at the waist at the back, but not confined in front at all; sleeves nearly close to the wrist. Really it looked very cool and suitable for a hot climate, and not quite like a nightdress, but rather a dressing-gown. They employ Javanese and Burmese servants, some of whom look the picture of the tightly-dressed figures on Chinese screens, but without the gilding and embroidery.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

April 17th, 1856.—A fearful flood has half-ruined the sugar planters on the coast. One week ago, gentlemen were riding over the plantations to see if the canes could really be so fine as represented, and all returned with great hopes for the progress of the colony. We were rejoicing in the tons of sugar our canes were to produce in a very few weeks. All looked fair and beautiful, and after so much toil and outlay, it seemed only reasonable to begin to count on the profits. Alas for our hopes! The river Umgeni rose so rapidly and so high that the whole country in its neighbourhood became a lake. Twenty or thirty feet of water covered many of the plantations. I am told that several islands, one above 100 yards long, floated over my husband's sugar canes. My husband and brother rode over to Springfield to see the wreck of last year's hopes, when on the point of realization. Each got a fall by the horse's legs sinking in holes, the ground giving way under their feet. Neither were hurt, and to-day, the waters having subsided, they wish me to accompany them to see all the wonders of the flood at Springfield.

I was soon equipped for the ride, and a ruinous sight we went to see. We had steep, slippery bits of road to go down or up, and I felt my brows knitted a good deal as I held my hand pretty firm on the bridle to be ready to hold the horse up in some of the worst steps. As we arrived in sight of Springfield Flat, we stopped to overlook. The flood had greatly gone down, and most of our cane was there, leaning over its roots, weighted down by the water and sand that had been washed over it. A man came up to us and told us that Spearman's cane,

below ours, was all washed away, with another man's stock and half of his oat forage! Poor men, I felt very sorry. One cane of Spearman's was washed uphill into Mrs. Smith's garden. This has been given for me to eat, at my leisure, at home; it is a remarkably fine cane, very heavy and large. When Smith was going to bed the first night of the rain, he said to his wife, "I don't feel quite easy about that horse of Mr. Feilden's, I think I'll go and bring it up to the house-stable to-night" He did so, and in the morning the river was above the roof of the poor animal's shed, and a barrel of tar had been washed away! The horse was saved. The Flat for some days was a lake, and then it sunk to a swamp, with the course of the great river tracked in water through its midst. After looking for a little, we rode on, but presently had to dismount, and lead our horses down to Smith's house, which has only suffered from damp. Here we had some tea and bread and butter, and then it was decided to go across the upper bank or fields to the mill. This was the worst of our ride; neither I nor the mare liked it, through the wet, boggy grass. The mill looked a wreck; I do not wonder at the first exaggerated reports. The facts were bad enough, for the water had got inside, and had loosened the great sugar pans from their place, and everything had been floating. We were told that an elephant had been carried down the stream, bellowing all the way; ducks, fowls, and pumpkins were all afloat. Mr. Beningfield had lost 100 cattle; the Umgeni rose from sixty to seventy feet. The four great sugar pans—all united, I think—while floating could be moved by the touch of a Caffre's hand; when I saw them they were moving *one* with a pulley and six or eight men, without the aid of water. Most fortunately there was no sugar in the mill. Poor Smith was very dull about it. This cane has been his pride; he planted and watched it, as if it were his own. May so good a servant be long preserved to us. We returned home by a cross-cut over the grass, and found it as good as the longer road for the time. There were deep

ruts and holes in the new road made by the soldiers, which quite spoiled it.

The effects of this sad flood were greater and worse than we at all anticipated, and finally drove us out of Natal. This most unfortunate storm was nearly as destructive further inland. We heard later on that, on Captain Stephenson's farm, the hailstones were as large as pigeon's eggs, and that they killed 240 sheep running on Mr. De Koc's farm. This gentleman with his wife dined with us a few days after the flood ; he then knew nothing of his own misfortune, the swollen rivers having made it impossible to cross them. One family, to escape being drowned in their house, climbed into the loft under the roof, and lived there upon beans and Indian corn for two or three days, till their signals were seen by a gentleman, who made a raft and brought them all away.

Some weeks later (June 8th) my husband sent the following account of the flood in a letter to England :—

"This flood has been a sad disaster ; the mortality among cattle and horses has nearly ruined us all ; I have only about thirty-three oxen left out of all my cattle and have lost four horses. My loss by the flood alone is estimated at 2000*l.*, which, coming upon other losses, has crippled and disheartened me.

"Could you have witnessed the flood sweeping over all our magnificent cane-fields, you would almost have despaired ; but it was a grand sight. The whole vale of the Umgeni was one sheet of water, rushing on to the sea in an impetuous torrent, carrying everything before it in its headlong course ; trees, houses, islands, and an enormous hippopotamus were borne along within a few feet from the mill, in which the water rose nine feet, destroying the work of many days, breaking down the batteries, and turning the inside of the place into a complete wreck, sweeping off 300 loads of fuel implements, carts, wagons, cattle, and everything within its reach. The water rose from sixty to seventy feet, and was truly a magnificent sight, though a sad one. Durban had a very narrow escape from being washed into the

ocean. Fortunately, the sandbar at the mouth of the river burst, and in one hour the water sank four feet.

"We had nearly got all things in readiness to commence crushing in May; I should have had about 120 tons of sugar for market by Christmas. You may imagine my feelings, when so much depended on my sugar crop; that gone, and I was ruined. At one time I did not expect to see a cane left. The first report I heard was in Durban, that the mill was washed away and all the cane carried out to sea. The back beach was a wonderful sight, covered with carcases of oxen, bucks, poultry, &c., &c. I rode out at once to Springfield with my brother-in-law. We pulled up our horses on the summit of the hill, to look upon the magnificent scene below us, and were so struck with its grandeur that it was not till I came close to the mill, and saw the sad devastation, that I thought about my own and others' loss. One side of the mill was swept out, a wagon that was secured to a tree had lost its sides, and a large iron sugar-pan was lying there. In the distance, a few tops of green sugar-cane just appeared above the surface of the highest ground of the 'Flat.' Islands of some hundred yards were carried away. In about a fortnight, the water had gone down so far as to enable a few of the most venturesome of the men to go on the Flat, wading far above the knees in mud.

"One poor fellow had every bit of his cane washed off, except a few roots so buried in sand as to be useless. Almost all my cane that would have been crushed this season was laid flat, some quite washed away, some buried; while almost all the young cane has been wonderfully improved by a deposit of rich mud being left a foot deep. So much for good coming out of evil! The cane in places soon began to recover, and a few showers helped to wash a portion of the mud and sand off it. I may save forty or fifty tons.

"We commenced at once to repair damages, and all put their shoulders to the wheel. I have got one set of batteries finished, and the other nearly so. We started the mill last Monday, and yesterday brought twenty-six

bags of sugar to market—two tons—a portion of which sold at 34*s.* a cwt."

This flood has made our house-builder and joiner fear that their payment will not be forthcoming, and they have consequently been very troublesome, and I must name one trait in our dear old neighbour, Mrs. Bowen. When I went to call on her after the disastrous flood, she said to me in an apologetic manner, as I was leaving, "I dare say there will be heavy demands on Mr. Feilden, and small tradesmen will all be sending in their bills at once, fearing his ruin; now I have 20*l.* in the house more than I want, and it is quite at his service." I thanked her, but declined the money, and she said, "Well, I know how people press on the unfortunate, and it is here if you find you want it."

Had the flood happened a little sooner we should probably not have built our new kitchen; meantime, it is an incalculable addition to our comfort, to mine in particular, and I wonder how we have managed so long without it; but except on stormy days we did not think much about the discomfort of cooking under the sky, or in the iron shed without a chimney. Now my new kitchen, with its scullery beside it, and my storeroom opposite, is the admiration of all who see it. The ample chimney draws well, and during the winter months we do not find it too hot to take our meals at its large table; thus we keep it as a sort of parlour-kitchen, and have all the dirty work done in the scullery or further away still. I have got my china and glass cupboard, and linen chest, from the house in the bay, which we had no room for before, and we look quite snug. My brother's room above is the most comfortable-looking of any we have; he often takes his visitors to it, and keeps it in clean and beautiful order. I doubt he is a regular old bachelor, and will require a wife by-and-by to look after his things, and she will find them in very good order. I wish my husband was half as particular; he is only particular in wishing each article put in its usual place, so that he may find it easily. Our two nephews have begun housekeeping for themselves in Gudgeon's cottage, which they

have made quite habitable *for Natal.* Daniel can make bread as well as I can, and as they are not yet engaged with any business, their housekeeping and garden occupy nearly all their time. I see the smoke rising cheerfully, three or four times a day. They are making the little garden quite neat; already their beans are starting into life, and they have a fair promise of pine-apples for next season.

When they want any assistance out of my kitchen, they come to borrow, sometimes a pan, or a dish, or anything else. They were pleasant, amiable young men, and gave but little trouble in our house. Still, with having to do so much with my own hands, I was glad when they began to do for themselves, for two extra in a house like ours must cause more work to the cook; I had to devote my time exclusively to house-work, which would have been too much for my feet and head if longer continued, but no visitors could have been more accommodating or unpretending, and I was sorry to let them go. It was their own proposition. When on their tour lately to see the country, and choose their further course, they walked twenty miles daily.

I was greatly amused by two of our Caffres coming to me lately, laughing, with painted faces, asking if they might look in my glass. I laughed at them, and said I would not paint my face, but it seemed "Master" had done it for them. He was painting doors and an iron bedstead, and had blued their eyebrows, painted a moustache and whiskers, with stripes of red on their faces, and then sent them to ask "Missus to let them see themselves." They enjoyed the joke greatly.

June 25th.—My dear old neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, is failing fast this winter. I go to her as often as I can, for she says, "To see me is better than any doctor," but her first words to me lately have always been "I am going very fast." I do not attempt to buoy her up with false hopes at her great age, but rather to cheer her with her state and her hopes for futurity. I see a great change in her of late, her mind and spirit are softening, in preparation doubtless for the change, but she is so quaint

in expressing herself sometimes that it is impossible to avoid a smile. I took her to-day a bouquet of rose-coloured geraniums that were flowering magnificently in our garden, and asked if she would like some cuttings at the proper season. She replied in a half-whisper, "Shall I want them in heaven?" She does not mean levity. Just now she is suffering from a bilious attack, and I fear its weakening effects, for no food will stay on her stomach. A glass of hot port wine with nutmeg and ginger was all the support she had yesterday, and the same to-day. I wish I were nearer to her to help her. She has a very respectful, quiet young man as servant at present, and she begins to give in so far as to think she may be obliged to have a woman, if she can only meet with a trustful and kindly one.

On hearing how ill she was, I walked across—my longest walk for a long time. I took Friday, the kitchen Caffre, for protection, and he carried a board to throw across a wet spot in the grass, but when we got there we found the wet extended a good many yards, so I said, "Friday, you must just carry me over." I have drilled English into his ears till he comprehends me with the aid of signs; so he lifted me up like a child on one arm, and set me carefully down at the other side of the swamp, and so again in returning. I smiled and said, "Very nice, Friday." I made him walk before me that I might "bloomer" it through the long grass to avoid being sprinkled with ticks, and whenever he came to anything like a little hole or a twig across the path, he turned to warn me of it, and removed the broken branch that lay in the way. He is a nice, amiable, and I do think, affectionate Caffre. We have taught him all he knows; I used at first to think him half silly, for he was always laughing. Once a "sister" came to see him in a pink frock; next day I went into the kitchen and asked for Friday. The pink frock looked up and grinned; the girl had given it to him. In spite of being laughed at, he wore it a few days, and then I fancy he discovered that it was not a man's attire, for it disappeared, and he has shown growth in understanding

since. He seems to have become fond of us. Many times he nods and smiles approval of my orders, or of anything which I do that he thinks clever. I wish I could learn to speak Caffre, that I might teach them something better; but I cannot, and I am much too deaf to pick it up, and I grow deafer.

It is a good thing to have some useful domestic offices to be obliged to busy oneself with, rather than with books and work. The housework requires constant attention, and keeps up the spirits by its active variety. I speak from experience, being entire housemaid, half waiter, and quarter cook, besides silkworm tender; but I have turned out against this last, as you shall hear. Great part of our silkworms' eggs chose to hatch in the middle of winter, when the mulberry-trees are at their worst, being so nearly frosted that the leaves break off with a touch, and are good for nothing. Presently the worms increased, while the leaves decreased, till we saw there could not be food enough for all. Then I began to calculate, and came to the conclusion that, unless we can rear the worms on the trees, the labour in this country will not be repaid were silk to produce 20*s*. a pound in England, unless some less toilsome mode of tending them be discovered. My husband, finding me so disgusted with such unproductive labour, and seeing the leaves to be insufficient, has consented to all the worms being destroyed, except a few of the finest, so to-day (July 7th) I have selected 200, to feed them well, and the rest are to take their chance. We will plant more mulberry-trees, which ought to have three years' growth before being freely stripped.

My brother has purchased about 1,200 acres of land on the Sea Cow Lake farm for growing sugar; and to be more on the spot, and so husband his time, he is having two huts built, substantial and well-thatched, one for his horse and Caffre, the other for himself, and the cost of each is to be 3*l*. Leyland has also had a large hut put up on his part of this same "Vlei," and both gentlemen wish me to go over for a few days, and try how I like the place. They have each a small iron

bedstead, that we did not require here at Feniscowles, with a small supply of tea, sugar, meal, flour, pans, &c., and I should not wonder if they make their first night of it there to-day or to-morrow, and Leyland will come soon to take me to try a little of hut-life in the wilderness. This kind of education is good for man now and then, teaching many things that cannot be learned in a drawing-room. I expected to find to-day a long one, for they set out after breakfast, and there was no cooking to look after, but the hours have flown ; it is now a quarter-past eight p.m. Neither gentleman intends returning to-night, perhaps not to-morrow ; business at Springfield requires Leyland, and Andrew is all eagerness to try his hut. I tell him, if he cannot manage housekeeping, he must just come back here again.

We eat preserves instead of butter, which is neither good nor plentiful about the coast. Our English preserves are a great treat, but we make some very good from the gooseberries of the country, which are more like large white currants than gooseberries ; the fruit grows within a husk on low bushes. The Indian sorrel preserve is very fine, "Corinda" we call it. The plant is not indigenous, but grows quickly from seed ; it bears a red flower or fruit all up the branches, looks pretty in the garden, and tastes acid, making a good substitute for red currant jelly to eat with venison or mutton. The core or seed-vessel, if taken young, makes a beautiful preserve tasting like crab-apples.

July 7th.—My husband sent me six pigeons he had shot,—fine, large, plump things. Some brute visited our fowl-house last night, and took one of our beautiful white cocks, a hen, and a chicken, leaving another chicken dead. This I have had cooked for my dinner, and a real choice bit it would have been for an invalid. We have set two traps to-night. The Caffres say the depredator is an animal—they know by the footprints —that uses a stick like a man ! yet not a baboon. When William Smith doubted it, Friday said, "You will see to-morrow, if we catch it to-night ;" but I do not expect to catch it, these animals are so sly. Poor Mrs. Galliers

has lost half her fowls during the last three nights. Her husband feared to go out, so she went out to try and frighten the thing away. A serious fright would be dangerous for her just now, and very awkward for me if she were alone, and taken ill up here. Leyland is remaining a day or two at Springfield to look into various things and workings, so I am alone.

Our new bishop gives no satisfaction. Power seems his great object; he has fairly created a schism, while he might have united a whole lot of dissenters with the Church. I hear he has chosen Mr. L—— (a Unitarian) as the medium of communication between himself and his "erring flock" as he calls them. The archdeacon's sister (Miss Mackenzie) I like extremely; she has what I call a lovely countenance, without great pretension to beauty. The archdeacon has a short, abrupt way of speaking, that is not so taking; he is in the Durban church. My husband met him riding our way one day; as he could not turn back, the archdeacon agreed to call on his return, so I got a nice dinner ready for him, but he never made his appearance.

CHAPTER XXIX.

August 20th.—We have latterly had so many disasters that my thoughts become engrossed with troubles. I try to remember that not one unnecessary trial is permitted, and I suppose we shall have one blow upon another, till we have learned the humbling and patient lesson they are designed to teach. It surprises me how Leyland keeps hoping on, though he looks careworn and anxious. My part seems to be rather that of patiently taking what comes, and bringing myself down to necessities as they arise. Except in domestic arrangements, where servants are worth so little that ladies must make up their minds to perform cheerfully many of those "menial offices" that "respectable young persons" in the *Times* advertisements object to, we have hitherto been always comfortably, or, I should rather say, abundantly provided. I trust we may daily become more sensible of the mercies we enjoy, beyond many of those around us. I do not know if it was on this principle of teaching me to know when I am well off, that my husband took me lately to try what living in a Caffre hut was. He required to look after some land on the other side of the Umgeni river; it is rather far to go there and back daily and transact business, so he agreed with a Caffre to put up a hut, such as Caffres live in, for ten shillings, and nothing would serve him but I must go and see the place, and pack up bed and bedding, sugar, tea, rice, &c., to last a week or ten days. I did not greatly relish the prospect, any more than the fulfilment of our play, but we managed wondrously after the second day. Till then our cart of goods was

accidentally detained, the hut was damp, and outside it was cold. There was, however, a bedstead, and enough to put up with; so we laughed and made the best of it, lighting a good wood fire on the floor of the hut, and looking as cheerful as circumstances permitted. Unluckily these two days proved gloomy, and we had not with us even a newspaper, or a needle, to wile away the time. Leyland had business that took him out and his gun, so he was better off than I, and I was glad when the cart came, and gave me something to do. I opened our small stock of stores, and presently we looked really comfortable, with mats on the ground, two small forms, and a box for our seats.

Our hut was shaped like a beehive, but instead of the usual hole to creep in at, such as serve the Caffre huts, Leyland had sent over a door with glass in it, serving to admit both our persons and the daylight more freely. The interior was all wicker-work of twigs, supported by tree stems. A screen of reeds separated our sleeping apartment from the main one; there was no door between, of course, and it was rather dark, so that when I retired to my bedroom I could not wholly free myself from the fear of snakes visiting me from the thatch or the grass. A couple of boards fixed between the posts supporting the roof formed our table, while baskets, fruits, pistols, meat, &c., were suspended over and around wherever any peg or nail could be placed. We had brought over a young Cochin China cock and hen for change of air, and we had to let them sleep inside the hut. However, they did more good than harm, for they picked up all the insects, and I dare not tell English ears what numberless insects, especially ants, become familiar to us in warm climates. Our hut was on the site of a former craal, and the stalks of the mealie garden were all around.

One day Leyland, seeing some nice dry firewood beside a solitary bush, told Caffre Tom (who had come back to us) to fetch the wood. Tom shook his head; he could not disturb that bush, it marked the grave of a Caffre. Then we learned that, when the head or chief

of a craal dies they bury him and leave the spot, destroying their huts. This had been the father of our nearest neighbour, whose craal was on the summit of a hill; a favourite situation, and wisely so. The Caffres showed great curiosity about us, both men and women coming to see us. They brought us presents of Caffre beer, and got a lump of bread and beef, or some sugar, in return, with which they were greatly pleased. Their beer or "chuwallah," made from mabile or Caffre corn, is a pleasant enough sour drink, but not inviting in appearance. One day the chief of the craal came when we were going to dine. He seated himself on the box against the side or wall, and chatted. How Leyland and he kept up the conversation I do not know, for neither knew much of the other's language. However, when the man rose to go, Leyland made him easily understand that he must stay and have some dinner, which was handed to him from our table; first soup, then meat, and a tin mug of tea. I suspect he did not often get so many varieties at a meal, and he went away delighted. We saw him several times, and when we left we put the hut with a few things in his charge, his craal being near at hand. One day he appeared at Smith's house at Springfield to say that they must send and take away our things, for the hut had been entered, and he would have no more charge. Nothing had been taken, however.

One day we had quite an influx of callers of a different style. Three gentlemen, my brother and Mr. Arthur Eastwood; two of them stretched themselves in a sitting posture on the floor mats, looking, as I am sure they felt, very comfortable indeed, and enjoyed the bread and butter with a glass of wine, which were handed down to them by the more fortunate possessors of the forms. We had only two tumblers (and they were borrowed) and one mug. The last had to do double duty daily, for Leyland and I regularly shared in it. We had a quart mug of tea on the table at breakfast, dinner, and tea. The kettle was almost always beside the fire on the ground; the teapot belonged to the camp-kettle.

The Caffre made a small pan of porridge every morning, which we ate with treacle, milk not being procurable. A shelf on one side held our small stores; on the floor below were bags of meal, &c., &c., our saddles and bridles, gutta-percha wash-hand basin and jug, with a watchman's rattle to summon the Caffres from a distance. We took only two soup plates (not having calculated for visitors), three flat plates, and two tin ones belonging to the camp-kettle, so that our housekeeping was not on a very extensive scale.

We took long walks and rambles together, when I learned, or re-learned, the use of my legs in climbing hills. On horseback, also, we had some scrambles up and down hill, through long grass that almost buried us, and under bushes with thorns of a finger-length and more, over and under.

One day in our ride we called at a house where we found the family seated round a table writing French verbs, the mother, a Frenchwoman, with her sewing, in the midst of them. Another day, after a three hours' ride at a walking pace, we unsaddled at a farm, and finding only Caffres about the house, made them give our horses a feed of mealies, while we sat on a log of wood and ate our bread and beef, which luckily we took with us. I enjoyed myself very well, but on the whole I was very much pleased to go home again, for I never could sit down comfortably to any one pursuit in our hollowed-out haystack—for such was its appearance.

Our Feniscowles looked so nice and clean and cultivated after the rough unploughed land, as we rode home across the fields and caught the first view of it, with the garden below. My brother says that the sketch I have made of the place does not do it half justice, and my husband says I must make another, showing the new building which adds so infinitely to our comfort.

After our return, my husband had to make another journey to Richmond, on the Illovo. Thinking we might wish to return there for change of air the next

summer, we left a large heavy box containing useful dishes, pans, &c., wh ch we did not require to use. The man whose house we occupied willingly allowed the box to remain free of charge, as it in no way inconvenienced him ; but he re-let his cottage with the box in it, and his tenant, at the end of a year and half, claimed 2*l.* for storage. This was so manifestly an imposition that Leyland resolved to resist it, and sent orders for the box to be instantly given up, or law would be resorted to. The tenant still refused, so my husband rode to Richmond, conducted his own case before the magistrate, and gained it with costs, but he had to put an execution in the house before the man would give up the box.

On his ride home my husband stopped at Captain Stephenson's farm, when his horse being turned out to feed took itself off, and was not to be found. Leyland required to be at home, so catching a horse from a herd of Mr. De Koc's, he saddled it and rode towards home by moonlight. When he got near Mack's farm, still twelve miles from home, it was midnight ; but by the strong light of the moon he saw a quantity of mushrooms, and dismounting, filled his handkerchief as full as it would hold, rode on to the farm, and roused the household to take him in. It is their busy time making sugar; the extra men employed were sleeping on the floor of the kitchen, but they made him welcome to share it with them, and enjoyed some of his mushrooms at breakfast in the morning. After breakfast, he rode on home. I had been wondering and calculating when and how he had been detained, and was endeavouring to secure there being a basin of good soup ready for him at any moment of his arrival. That morning, when he did not appear by ten o'clock, I thought, "Now I am safe till afternoon. I'll send William and the Caffre boy for what we want from Durban, and they'll be back in time to take Leyland's horse, if he should come to-night." I sent them off, and made all straight, looked down the bush-path, and across the hill many times, but there were no signs of

Leyland. "A watched pot never boils," said I to myself, so I took my work-basket about half-past eleven, and commenced mending his socks. Somehow, I became buried in thought as my needle went on; I fancied I heard a sound outside, but had been out so often and found nothing, that I paid no attention, my head bent over my work and my brows, I believe, knitted. I lifted my head at last, and there, seated on the sofa opposite, looking at me, sat Leyland. He did not half like the look of care he found on my face, and which he said he had been watching "this half-hour," but, of course, that was speaking without his watch.

We have certainly had drawback after drawback, but our chief one has been want of practical colonial experience to begin with.

We are hoping just now for a little rain to water the seeds and newly planted fences of pomegranates and mulberry-trees. The latter can be interwoven, Leyland thinks, to make a secure living fence, to keep out some of those troublesome wild visitors that eat up all our vegetables before we can gather them in. My brother enjoys the novel and active life he is having, helping to erect his own hut, and planning the cultivation of the acres he has lately become the master of on Sea Cow Vlei. He has got Henry, the youngest of Smith's sons, to help him, but his Caffre, Jim, like ours, has gone to his craal for a month's holiday, so we all have to manage as best we can. For my part, I have been making an ogre of myself to the young Caffre I got instead of Friday, who has gone home for a wife to live in idleness, and when he is "tired of being at home" he will come back here to us. Is not that a favour? Yet we have to submit, for Government does nothing but help the Caffre to be idle. How they mean to civilize or Christianize in the petting way they are going on I do not know. But my boy Caffre has really improved under my fierce anger; and, except that I have to follow him like his shadow, he shows both quickness and aptitude. He has got hold of the English word "yes," and provokes me by saying "yes" to

everything, so that I never know that a thing is done or not without going to see. If he were not a little afraid of me he would sit and snuff all day, and perhaps spit craals on the sand, if he have any talent for drawing, as I have seen some of them.

It was very provoking in Friday to go away just when he had become so useful, and I had drummed into his head so many English words. It seems that the "sister" who came to see him, who gave him her pink frock, is the girl who is to be his wife. He left in a state of considerable excitement, carrying his worldly goods on his shoulder, neatly rolled into his sleeping mat and tied at each end. I saw him the day before he left, very mysteriously busy with a knife and stick. When I asked what he was doing, he laughed, but said nothing. By-and-by, he came and presented to me a beautifully pealed white wand or switch, to use as a riding-whip. It is of the white pear-tree, and supple; I value it much, as the most gallant and grateful act I have met with in a Caffre, and I brought it with me to England in remembrance of Caffre Friday.

My neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, got into a sad scrape the other day, and sent for my husband to help her out. A servant, for whom she was in half treaty, behaving impertinently, she ordered him to take himself off, upon which he sent her a lawyer's letter for his travelling expenses and loss of time, which so irritated her that she tore his bill in two, and sent for my husband, who advised a compromise and paying the man a reasonable sum; but the lawyer, wishing to put something in his own pocket, allowed only Sunday to elapse, and sent up an extra demand by a man on horseback on Monday, adding that if it were not settled before the following morning, she—at seventy-nine years of age, alone in the world, living out in the country (without either wagon or horse)—must appear in court to the summons on Wednesday morning. It was growing dusk, and she had but a little boy and a Caffre at hand. Calling the boy, she said, "Johnnie, I don't know what to do; if this is not settled to-morrow morning, I shall have to

appear in court." "Well!" said Johnnie, "if you will let the Caffre go with me, I will start off to-night and return to morrow morning." He did so, and her friend in Durban hunted over the town to find the people, arranged the matter and got her off for 2*l.*, instead of near 4*l.*

September 30th.—My husband is writing to his mother, and I am writing to mine. I am seated at a large table that is placed along the end of the kitchen, which room we somehow make both kitchen and dining-room, and often prefer sitting in it in the evenings from the cheerfulness and convenience of the fire. We have visitors, the Rev. Mr. and Miss Fearne (Miriam) from Richmond, and a very worthy couple, Mr. and Mrs. Pigg, from the same neighbourhood. My brother has carried off the clergyman to see his hut at Sea Cow Vlei, to get a little fishing in the river, and to look out for sea-cows or hippopotami for a couple of days. The two Mr. Whittakers have come over, and are helping Mr. Pigg to mend the roof of our old rickety stable, so they are also visitors, and must sleep on the sofa, the floor, or the table, or Mr. Fearne's bed during his absence. Mr. Fearne's health being very delicate, we invited him to come to us for relaxation and change of air, and ten days have made a great improvement in him. He takes Archdeacon Mackenzie's duties in Durban, while the archdeacon and his sister are enjoying a change of duty at Maritzberg; and to make the change trifold, the Maritzberg clergyman, Mr. Greene, takes Mr. Fearne's duties at Richmond. Miriam is a fine, bright, lively, fair girl, with a good deal of character. She has been six months with Mrs. Colenso, at school, and likes it. The "grey sisters" teach, and Mrs. Colenso has given her lessons in drawing. They teach a number of natives at the new station, three miles out of Maritzberg. My husband has been giving a few lessons in English reading to two of our Caffres, both desirous to learn. The little boy is very quick, and it seems to me the best plan is to teach in English, for then you know you are right, and they take great interest in learning the meaning of new

words. The bishop, I believe, is learning Caffre, to teach them in their own language, and the shrewd Caffres must laugh at his blunders among themselves.

Mr. and Mrs. Pigg were among the 250 emigrants who came out in the ship that brought my husband the first time to Natal. He observed their behaviour on board as so superior to that of others that he has kept up an acquaintance with and interest in them, and when we were staying at Richmond last year we became quite friendly. They have two grown-up sons ; a daughter, married out here, died very suddenly lately, and when my husband found them in grief, and ill both in mind and body, he asked them to come to us for a little change. Mr. Pigg is a joiner, and amuses himself with finishing bits of work undone or badly done about our new building, while Mrs. Pigg is a great assistance to me in the house. Whenever she sees me pressed in any way, she helps. If anything is wanting at table, I have only to give her a look, and she rises to get it. As it would be impossible for me alone to do the extra house-work with so many visitors, we each take charge of our own room, and now one, now another, puts Mr. Fearne's in order. Miss Fearne occupies my brother's room, so when he is with us he sleeps on the sofa in the parlour, and prefers making his own bed his own way.

Miriam has taken the silkworms in hand, but she begins to find it rather fatiguing and tiresome to keep their trays clean and nice, and to supply their voracious appetites with leaves. Our present set of worms are very fine, and take a great deal of attendance, so Miriam has enlisted little Billy Galliers to help her. Just now they are beginning to spin ; every one lent a hand the other evening after tea, to make little paper cones for their reception. The kitchen was quite a manufactory ; Mr. Fearne, Leyland, Mr. and Mrs. Pigg, were twisting up these papers, Miriam and I stitching them on to a large sheet of the *Manchester Guardian,* all of us seated round the large table, as busy as ants. My time is so fully occupied that, if I sit down to read or sew for a quarter of an hour during daylight, I feel

like a culprit. We rise early; I go and see if Tom has made the fire and put on the kettle. As soon as I am dressed, I hurry to get breakfast ready, having set Tom to prepare as much as he can. We require a hearty breakfast. This morning when I went out at half-past six, I found Mrs. Pigg had got the rice on the fire, and was warming up the curry, and just in the act of placing a salt fish on the grid. Bread, butter, and abundance of tea completed the meal, with preserves, eggs, &c., &c. The bell rang for breakfast at seven, but it was eight before it was over and prayers read.

We dine at two o'clock. Soup is a standing dish, so that must be prepared, the vegetables made ready for the pan, and the meat closely and carefully examined. An English lady would shrink from the inspection I daily make, but I prefer doing it myself, for I find I am quite the most particular and effectual in the examination that must be made, if sweet beef is to be eaten. Tom attends the fire, cleans the pans and knives, fetches and cuts the wood. I lay the dinner-cloth and see that all is right on it, and after dinner Tom washes up. Then we take a little stroll in the garden, look for ripe papaws, call a light Caffre to climb the stem, and bring the fruit down; look at our pine-apples, and pick out such as are ready. We have splendid desserts; our fruits would grace a Lord Mayor's banquet. A bunch of bananas is sometimes too heavy for me to carry, almost to lift. We boil a papaw fruit to eat with rice and sugar. The .scarcity of milk prevents many puddings being made. Pastry is not relished, so our desserts serve for second course.

Last Monday was my husband's birthday, so I made with my own hands a capital suet dumpling, and Mrs. Pigg boiled a papaw to put round a pyramid of fine Carolina rice, a bag of which, with other good and useful things, has just arrived from England from Lady Feilden. We mean to have a party on the 8th of October, our marriage anniversary, when a silver cup is to be presented to Smith, our worthy and hardworking farm-servant, to express my husband's appreciation of

the manner in which he has planted the sugar estate. The cup was ordered from England when we were in the highest expectation of reaping a good harvest; and now the flood has carried it all away, and we know not yet how deeply it will involve us in loss. But Smith's work was all the same, and his vexation and disappointment are as great as ours, so he is to have the cup, and we feel he deserves it.

CHAPTER XXX.

"*October 5th.*—MY DEAR MRS. BOWEN,—We want you to come and dine with us at two o'clock on Wednesday next, the 8th, if you will be so good. Mr. Feilden will send the mare and a trustworthy leader for you, and to take you home again before dark. Do please come. It will not be exactly such a party as we would have invited to meet you, but we think it will give you pleasure to come. On that day we shall have been married five years. Hitherto we have spent the anniversary by our two selves, but Mr. Feilden wishes to give Smith some testimony of his respect for his faithful and diligent services, so uncommon in Natal, and we have invited him and his family, and the party has grown out of this. We count six, my brother and the Whittakers make nine, two or three more will make up a good number, and we hope you will help to eat our haunch of venison, shot yesterday on purpose. It will give us all sincere pleasure and gratification. My husband walked from Springfield, giving up his horse to carry the fine large buck, which Caffre Tom was proud to conduct."

The day previous to our party every one lent a helping hand. A temporary shed was erected and thatched, the sides hung with matting, and ornamented with evergreens and wild flowers. At one o'clock our guests began to arrive, and at two we sat down to "an elegant entertainment," as the reporters would say. All our silver was put in requisition, and with the flowers, &c., the table in the shed looked bright and gay. After dinner, Mr. Fearne rose, and in a kind and amusing

speech proposed our healths, to which Leyland replied, and at the same time took all by surprise with the silver cup, filling it to the brim with excellent punch, and presenting it to Smith, with a speech which was reported in our local paper, *The Mercury*. The cup was passed round the table, and each took a sip to Smith's good health. His wife said he was "too full to speak."

Every one was in the best of tempers. Caffre Tom, our only house-servant, exerting himself to clean pans, knives, and plates, and to keep up the fire, &c., &c.; but he found so good an assistant in Mrs. Pigg all the time she was with us (near a month), that we thought he rather imposed upon her in a common way, and hoed the garden instead of cooking.

We sent Alec Smith with the mare to bring Mrs. Bowen. She was delighted, and enjoyed herself fully; but, fearing rain, she left our party rather early. She presented me with some affectionate lines she composed for the occasion, and two glasses of preserves of her own making from the "corinda" or Indian sorrel plant, an excellent addition to venison.

Besides the party already named, Leyland had invited the editor of the *Natal Mercury*, as an old acquaintance of Mr. Fearne, who expressed a wish to see him again; a young Frenchman, with his bride; the Springfield sugar-boiler from Mauritius; our friend Mr. Kock, and little Billy Galliers, whose invitation gave great delight both to the child and his mother, and he and little Polly Smith (six and four years old) formed quite a picture, walking up and down the garden arm-in-arm, behaving so well at dinner, and enjoying the good things as much as any one.

Our table and seats were made of boards, covered first with a rough coarse sheeting, and over that with Lady Feilden's beautiful damask table-cloth. I had hard work to get dressed in time, in one of my pretty muslins. I managed it, however, just in time to receive and help Mrs. Bowen off her horse, and take her into the house myself.

Tea and coffee-cups with our silver set, a beautiful currant bun, and small cakes made by Mrs. Pigg, were all placed ready in the drawing-room, with flowers, and I can assure you that it was a beautiful and well-behaved party, and was richly enjoyed.

In the evening those who remained, consisting of fourteen of the party, cleared the room to prepare for some kind of amusement. Mr. Fearne suggested charades, himself assisted, and very much tended to their going off with the greatest *éclat* and clapping of hands, the Whittakers, Andrew, Leyland, Mr. and Miss Fearne, and myself all taking parts. The words acted were generally guessed to all outward appearance; but, in truth, Leyland or I, being behind the scene helping to dress them up, whispered the word at the last to the other, so as to give more fun. The Caffres peeped in at the windows. We lodged fourteen persons that night! Miriam took Mrs. Smith into her room with the two children, Margaret and Polly Smith; Andrew and the Whittakers, Smith and his boys managed with sofas and shakedowns.

All hands helped to clear away, as they had done to prepare; fifteen supped and breakfasted, so mirth and work went together, and I heard no complaints of a bad night's rest. Mrs. Smith says she is sure neither she nor Smith, nor his children, will ever forget the day. So substantial was our dinner, that we needed not to send for butcher's meat for a week.

I think I must describe the dinner more particularly. We began with soup and fish. Mrs. Smith sat at a convenient corner of the table, and slipped away to see everything rightly dished; but much was cold, and placed on the long table to begin with. Tom carried in the dishes, then sat on the floor, washing knives and plates; but we had placed a good supply of these to each person's place, so that very little waiting was required. Soup and fish were removed by the haunch, cold beef, cold venison pie, hot fowls, and a beautiful ham from Richmond, tarts and tartlets—no creams or jellies, but a dish whose contents were eagerly devoured—

a pyramid of Carolina rice, beautifully boiled and white, surrounded by boiled mulberries. Carolina rice is not sold in Natal, but the very inferior small grained East Indian, so Lady Feilden's was a treat. In describing the dessert, I need only say that our papaw fruits are some as large as my head, a banana fruit (from a heavy large bunch) six and a half inches long. This grand bunch formed the centre dish ; pine-apples and papaws all up and down the table ; the granadillas are hanging in clusters, and our vines look beautiful. I have often wished I could send a bunch of our grand bananas to Witton to Mr. Feilden, where first I saw and tasted that fruit. There a few small fruits were handed round as a delicacy, here each one helped himself to as many as he pleased. Another fruit, the loquat, will soon be ripe ; this is a delicious fruit, rather larger than a crab-apple, and something of that fine yellow colour.

But I must proceed to give Mrs. Bowen's congratulatory verses. They are :—

TO MY DEAR FRIENDS, J. L. AND E. W. FEILDEN, ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR WEDDING DAY.

" 'Tis well to offer the new made bride
A wreath of fair orange flowers,
And to pray that our sweets may be outvied
By the fragrance of future hours.
And then 'tis well to see her move
In a grave yet graceful mood,
Through rough and smooth with winning love,
Cheerfully leading to good.
And is it not well when years are gone by,
And the trials of life may be known,
To view that sweet sympathy beam in each eye,
Which tells of affection alone ?
Yes ! 'tis well, and 'tis sweet, and joyous we hail
The return of that hallowed day,
Which blest your true faith and love never to fail,
Nor even with life to decay.
For the Lord, the Creator, who bless'd the first Bride,
Still sanctifies vows heard above,
Nor doubt ye, that holier, glorified
In Heaven, you still shall love.

" *Oct. 7th*, 1856. M. BOWEN."

The next day I find myself writing to Mrs Bowen :—

"I am glad to find you are none the worse, and we may hope all the better, for your little out, Mr. Fearne says he feels so well this morning that he thinks dissipation must agree with him. The threatened storm held off famously, but it hurried away the riders of the party, and we wound up the evening by acting charades, which caused peals of laughter. I have just seen the Smiths and Mr. and Mrs. Pigg off per wagon, Mr. Pigg walking with my brother, who has kindly invited them to stay with him a day or two to see the sugar-making, which both have expressed a strong wish to see.

"Mr. Feilden took charge of Miriam ; soon after nine this morning she went to spend the day with the Grice's, and Mr. W. Whittaker is goodnaturedly staying with me to clean me up all the silver and put it in its chest again."

October 28th.—There seems a mere nothing of work in the house now all our visitors are gone. We are very dull just now. The last mail has brought us the sad news of the very sudden death of my husband's youngest sister, a fine, handsome, young-looking woman of forty-five, the mother of fourteen or fifteen living children, and just delivered of a still-born daughter, the eighteenth child. We hear there is a book on the way for each of us, that she had sent by private hand shortly before. Will it not be valued ? Leyland is very sad about this loss.

The trials we each most require are those that are sent to us, and if we are without trials, is it not a sign that we may be "let alone" ? Let us all cling to the arm thrown out to support us, and humbly and meekly learn the lessons designed to be taught, nor wish to be "let alone."

"*November 9th.*—MY DEAR MRS. BOWEN,—I can scarcely keep awake. I nodded several times in reading a most interesting account of the Waldenses. In the garden I grew so dizzy that I must have fallen had not my husband caught me. Poor Tom ran up the hill and brought water in 'no time.' My mother would say, 'It

is the stomach, Eliza,' but I think the mind affects the stomach, for Mr. Feilden has been far from well, and our minds have been on the stretch lately."

Amongst the smaller very trying troubles has been that of the Caffres' times being up, and though they are as happy as the day is long, and are learning as well as working, they want to go to craal. Even Tom rather wished for a holiday. The boys had agreed to remain, but one came from Springfield on his way home, and tried to persuade our two to go with him. One so far yielded as to gather up his sticks and come to say good-bye; but Mr. Feilden, with Tom's aid, showed him that he must stay now. If all were to go, what should we do? Last night I listened to Mr. Feilden giving Tom and Piccaninni their English lesson, and was amazed at the progress they have made in so short a time. For a full hour their attention never seemed to flag. I exclaimed, "Well, if I were you, I would not go till I had learned to read at all events." Both laughed and looked pleased. Their minds grow; they perceive things that never struck them before. Both are nice Caffres. The little one is full of fun. I should like to have him bound for five years, in order that he might be taught to read and learn the Word of God.

"*November 18th.*—MY DEAREST MOTHER,—Andrew went off rather suddenly yesterday, so he left his letter for me to finish and to read if I liked, and I am sure it will comfort your heart to observe the pleasant, cheerful, and hopeful spirit in which it is written. He looks well and *walks* from his farm here, coming in hungry. This and the manual labour he sets himself to, are having the best possible effect upon his spirits. At first I was sorry he should make a lonely home for himself, ten miles distant, but now I see it is better. He feels he is not wasting his days looking on, and he comes and goes, which makes variety for him, and gives him an object to look forward to. He has built his second hut himself, with the aid of these boys and an occasional Caffre, and he assures me it is stronger and firmer by far than the one he got built for his horse.

which at present he uses for himself. When he came over on Thursday, he was full of two porches he has made, since I was there, to protect the doors, and which are large enough for four persons to sit in. These will be a luxury in this sunny climate. By the way, he talks of having seen neither sun nor moon this season until his birthday (the 17th) which proves that at least he has slept well, for though we have had an unusually wet and cloudy commencement to our summer, there certainly was one day that aired a quantity of clothes and that dried things in no time, when I was thankful to wear your charming blue glasses to dim the glare of the linen in the sun, and as to the moon, I fancy I could have read by its light when I have wakened occasionally in the night.

"Mrs. Smith came kindly in the cart yesterday to clean my house down, windows and floors from top to bottom. We don't try to get a white servant now, feeling so much more comfortable without, so long as we have Caffre Tom, who has such pleasant manners and understands English fairly. He is slow; but when he knows how, he does things well. I find I can put my hand to a great many things I never thought of trying, or of ever having to try, when in England. I cannot be thankful enough for my good health and activity. Andrew thinks I am stronger than I was in England, but that is not the case by any means, only he sees me doing a great deal more without being overdone.

"I sometimes wish, my dear mother, that you could be transported in a balloon to visit us during our finest season. You would enjoy our situation and garden, and Andrew's fine atmosphere and beautiful scenery. But if your balloon chanced to land you during a wet season, all would be dismal, and no comfort at all, except that which we could make for ourselves, for a wet day in Natal is miserable. We have had many rubs, hardships, and trials here, and shall hail a return to old England with joy; but we have been very happy here, and are both daily learning the great lesson of life —discipline,—with a practical knowledge and com-

passion for what hundreds of thousands go through in struggling through life, which those of our station and standing at home never come near except in a very small way. Those who visit the poor see, for a moment at a time, scenes of misery, and that is again in a different line of life. I have been told there are no poor in Durban, and yet, in proportion to its size, I believe there is nowhere more of the struggles and troubles of life to keep heads above water. Our colony is a poor one, and many of the colonists are like old Mack here, who came to take possession of a new, unploughed country with half-a-crown in his pocket. The struggles to be gone through on the road to success are what none but a brave heart can endure and surmount. From our windows I begin to see little patches of cleared ground and bush-land, and I think of how they get along, and what disappointments and privations meet them; and yet how hope prevails over all, and they go on."

Our new Governor has arrived, and every one is on the *qui-vive* to know what he will turn out. We have been, I may say, without a Government for eighteen months, so little good have the acting officials done. The Queen has granted Natal a separate constitution, and now we are "the colony of Natal," independent of Cape interference, from which place we are distant a thousand miles. The Caffres are to be well off, and will grow more saucy than ever; but if they can be Christianized it may be worth the sacrifice of the present generation of white population. I think the interests of both might be secured by good management.

November 24th.—The elegant conveyance which Col. Cooper (our acting Lieut.-Governor) sent to convey our new Governor, Scott, and his lady from the ship, was a common ox-wagon, without carpet, and only a single chair in it. The papers were very severe upon it, as there are private light wagons for lady-travelling, the owner of any of which would have willingly lent it. Again, he took them to the camp, a horrid place, I am told, smelling of everything nasty; while one private house was offered for their use, and the papers say

others would readily have placed theirs at their service! Mrs. Scott is early being instilled into colonial disagreeables.

December 10th and 20th.—There are disturbances among the Zulus, and the Durban Rangers have been called out, mainly to prevent our Caffres from leaving their service and going to join their friends across the Tugela, to steal cattle from both friend and foe. We are under no alarm here, and there is every hope that the war will be confined to the territory to the north of the Tugela.

One of our old Caffres, John, a mere garden worker, came back to us yesterday; but Tom has not yet turned up. He promised he would return before the little boys left for their home, so now we fear he may have gone to the scene of the Caffre war, to take his opportunity of stealing his neighbours' cattle—a lawful practice, I conclude, in times of war. We hope he has not been assegaied, both for his own sake and ours. He is a Zulu, and there was some mystery in his father's sending for him just before we heard of the late outburst and massacre. Some skewers which were in his charge have disappeared; he may have taken the loan of them for points, excusing the act to his conscience by the necessity of the times.

We are told that the Governor is going about very quietly to judge for himself of the state of things among the Caffres. There have been fearful slaughters among them. Troops have been sent for, which is only a wise precaution, but we feel no alarm in Natal. We are told that Panda and the beaten chief are both alive, the latter in hiding. Numbers have come into Natal for protection. Some could only clear the river and drop, poor things! I hope they will get buried quickly, or the air will be poisoned and create other troubles. Poor Tom! I do not know how we are to hear of him; he belongs to a craal different from all the rest.

Mr. Baldwin, one of the Zulu traders or huntsmen, a great sportsman, is down just now. The Caffres allowed him to pass unmolested, saying he had never hurt them.

We have been looking for him here; should he come, he may, perhaps, furnish us with some interesting particulars of the state of the country. He confirms the account of bodies lying everywhere, and they were burying as fast as they could. The papers give a fearful account of the treatment of Umbulasi.

November 29th to December 5th.—"MY DEAR SISTER MARGARET,—I am drawn in various directions at this moment, but your name has prevailed over all other claims, so I must indulge in writing you a few lines. One of the cords that pulled me very hard was attached to the sofa, with 'The Life of the Rev. Mr. Simeon' to luxuriate in; another was, to sew a deep, white curtain to my ship-board calico bonnet for the garden use; while a third was to turn a silk dress; but this last was least strong, for it will require consideration, and I am in a humour only for idle work. Would you fancy it possible? I feel myself caught, if found with a book or a bit of my own work in hand, just as I should have felt in England if I had been found reading a novel in the forenoon. Does that give you an idea of idleness? Indeed I am not idle (I may say *we* are not), as you shall judge, when I tell you that our good Caffre Tom, whom I was boasting of to Mary only ten days ago, has gone to his craal for a holiday. He came to me last Tuesday to say,—

"'Me brother come for me; me sister very sick; me father say he come take me if I not go.'

"'Oh, Tom! but what shall I do?'

"'I tell me brother' (with a shake of his head).

"'What do they want you for, Tom?'

"'I not know, ma'am. I say I not go till Misser Feilden come home;' and really he did look more conscientious than most of them do.

"When Leyland returned in the evening, however, Tom talked to him, said he would soon return, and off he set, carrying two doses of salts for the invalid, and a couple of beautiful pine-apples to cheer her with; and thus was I left to manage my housekeeping as best I could. Little 'Piccaninni,' as we call an intelligent

little mahogany-coloured boy of about thirteen who weeds in the garden, does a little towards taking Tom's place, but only a very little; and though a very nice little boy, he is not a little difficult at times to manage, taking fits of idleness or naughtiness, and singing away when he is scolded in sheer impudence. I got very angry with him yesterday, for instead of feeding the pigs, as I told him, I found him sitting in the barrow, chewing sugar-cane. I gave him a good lecture, and to my surprise it has done him good; he has been much more diligent since. I wish you could see Leyland giving them a reading-lesson in the evenings. It is quite a picture. This little boy is remarkably quick; he has learned to read easy words in English before understanding them since September 1st, and anything in the Caffre tongue he learns doubly quick. He is as full of mischief as you can imagine, and has a fine, open, merry expression, with a pair of brilliant black eyes. His lessons call forth peals of laughter, when Leyland infuses some new idea into his ignorant mind; but he thinks 'there is so much to learn, they shall never know it all.' The little grain of mustard-seed grows into a large tree; let us hope and pray it may do so here. Paul plants, Apollos waters, but God giveth the increase. Tom is a very dull learner, but he is older; the third pupil I cannot yet understand. A phrenologist would not give him credit for great powers of mind, beyond cunning, but he rather improves in conduct. However, both these boys' times will be up at the end of this week, and I believe they mean to go to their craal and indolence. If Tom should not return by then, I shall be literally left to do that which in one of your letters you said (after Leyland's and my engagement) you did not think you could give your consent to, viz., that I should have to keep my house clean with my own hands, as so many ladies in America and Australia have found themselves reduced to. It is pretty nearly the case now, but I am wonderfully supported under it all, and my spirits rarely flag.

"I am much more concerned about Springfield than

about myself. It is found that the Springfield sugar estate is too large for its means to carry on. A company was formed to work the mill department; Leyland was induced to give his consent to the appointment of a manager, who has so mystified and mismanaged things that it is touch-and-go whether we shall pull through or be ruined. The flood, however, was the prime cause of the difficulty, because it destroyed the crops that were counted upon to pay the working, &c. Perhaps we counted too surely upon this, and God has seen fit to check our ardour, and to show that He holds all things in His hands, to prosper or withhold. Of this I feel so certain that I take everything as it comes very quietly, and I think I am content that all shall be just as He sees best, for I know that all things, the veriest trifles, are under His control, and are permitted for the furtherance of our heavenward growth. After all, what is this life, and all it can yield, at its best? Only a few days are we permitted to enjoy, and then we are taken away, not—as the Caffre thinks—to perish in the earth like the beasts, but to judgment for our use or abuse of the means placed in our power. More and more do I feel that God searcheth the heart, rather than the outward action. The veil was certainly removed in Christ. 'Bring no more vain oblations.'

"My brother wants me to spend a week with him at his farm and hut, and the Whittakers have invited me to go to them for a week when they shall have built their hut, but I say I cannot leave Leyland, for I don't know what he would do without his shadow. He says I should find the house empty on my return.

"I wish we could send you a dessert from our garden occasionally. Two days ago, when Andrew was here, we had on the table, at luncheon, a pine-apple, a large papaw, some bananas, and granadillas. We have had 1500 pine-apples and upwards this last year, and no market for them since the steamers were taken off the coast. They have been given away in dozens.

"Mrs. Bowen's seventy-ninth birthday occurred last month, November 27th. She is toiling along the last

stages of life all alone, yet I believe she enjoys much happiness in the midst of much fretting vexation about trifling and annoying evils—trifles are, after all, the most difficult to bear equably. I believe no one experiences this more than poor old Mrs. Bowen. On her birthday (the weather being quite too hot for me to walk over to see her) we made up a beautiful basket full of various things we thought she would enjoy. Her pine-apples have failed, so a fine one was put in, and a lovely bouquet of flowers crowning the basket from the midst of the large picturesque papaw leaf.

"The thermometer is now at 76° in the room where I write, with doors and windows open, and no sun as yet in it, on this 5th day of December, 1856. Out of doors it is much hotter. Leyland has just come in; he says I am to tell you to send us word when you are going to give a party, and if there is time he will sell you fourteen pine-apples for one shilling, and give you credit for the money. He and Andrew and I ate one the other day that you would have given thirty shillings for. I do not think I shall be able to eat or buy pine-apples in England after finding them so cheap here. Leyland says also I may tell you that we have cut our first cucumber to-day. Hitherto the seed has failed, and he threw some into a place, not expecting it to grow, and one plant has appeared, and others may follow. We did the same by the Aberuchil melon seeds, never expecting to see them up, but lo! there they are, fine, healthy young plants, growing on a manured bed near the stable, among some magnificent young pumpkins, some of which may have to be rooted out to make room for their more esteemed neighbours.

"I have had many interruptions while writing this letter. It has been a week on the stocks. Once, in the middle of a sentence, Leyland came and persuaded me to don my hat and go with him to the bush, to watch them cutting stakes for a fence. A wilder scene you could hardly picture, the strokes of the axe, the rustling of the leaves, or the falling of the branches, being the only sounds besides our own voices in the midst of

tangled weeds and trees and bushes of all sizes and descriptions. There is much that is exciting and attractive in a wild bush life. 'Queechy' draws scenes from the life. This moment I have been to the kitchen to see how dinner is getting on; I skimmed the beef in the pan, put a few logs of wood on the fire, and put the bread in the oven to bake. We possess a most charming kitchen now; the comfort of it I cannot overrate. Mr. Kock said it would be fitter for the North Pole than for these sunny regions, and that for many months in the year we should not be able to use it; but we find it the greatest comfort. Here is the hot weather, yet we cook and eat in our kitchen. The stove keeps in a good deal of heat, and wood fires are not like coal fires, they soon lose heat."

One other letter to my neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, will, I think, close my reminiscences this year. It is dated December 26th, 1856:—

"MY DEAR MRS. BOWEN,—Hoping for some chance mode of communication between Feniscowles and Keventrenfa to-day, I sit down while I have a little leisure to have a chat with you, thinking that I have earned the leisure by being up at four o'clock this morning, and having made a comfortable, hot breakfast, and seen Mr. Feilden off for Maritzberg by five. I must go back to yesterday, when I had hoped to have paid you a visit of Christmas greeting with my husband, and to have carried my tart myself, and apologized in person for the somewhat ragged look it received in baking, and to have expressed a hope that, if the crust did not meet your approval, the interior might. I have not eaten its fellow tart yet, for a tapioca pudding I tried my hand in proved so good that none of us did more than look at the tart. Mr. Feilden had invited Mr. Cope to dine with us *en famille* yesterday at from two to three o'clock, and learning, after the invite was given, that the Smiths were having some sort of Christmas gathering, we did not like to deprive Alec Smith of the unusual pleasure and gaiety, so I at once said I could manage everything at home, and Alec might have a whole day of it. Do not you

think I was very bold to undertake the whole work of the house, with a not very intimate friend coming to dinner, and with only a Caffre to light and keep up the fire, and wash out the pans? I must tell you what I gave them for dinner. I stewed a piece of beef and made soup of the liquor with maccaroni, which was pronounced capital; I baked a small shoulder of mutton so well that I was amazed at myself. There was no doubt of its being mutton, which in this *quick* country cannot always be recognized by the flavour; but, having to dish up the dinner and to slip on my silk dress afterwards, there was no time to make proper gravy (as Mrs. Smith has taught me), lest dinner should grow cold. However, the mutton was so juicy that the gravy was not missed. We had calabash and rice for vegetables, pudding and tart, and a beautiful dessert, with a good cup of coffee afterwards. I was never required to rise from table to replace things, Mr. Feilden getting up twice for what was not within arm's reach on the side table. Do not you think I may apply for a cook's place soon? I tell my husband I am fitting myself for housekeeper in some old bachelor's small establishment some day, but he says it would not long remain a bachelor's house. Caffre John was very attentive and very willing as far as he comprehended, taking away plates and dishes, and washing all up. Alec was to have returned last night, but the pleasure of the day lasted so long that he found it too dark. He has brought me a piece of his mother's plum pudding, which is very good; but these things are all rather rich, so after a taste I mean Mrs. Galliers and Billy to come down the hill and each have a slice, and Alec can finish what is left.

"This brings me to another subject. Mrs. Galliers wishes me to tell you that she was quite shocked with the behaviour of that rude, forward girl who accompanied her to Keventrenfa, uninvited, and spoiled her own pleasure in the visit and walk, and she wondered that you took it so quietly. Mrs. Galliers does not know her name. Her mother washes for some of the men where Galliers works, and this girl carries clothes.

She has often asked him to bring her up here, and he told her that she might come if she liked, so yesterday she made her appearance, pried into everything at Mrs. Galliers' house, and would not help her in any way, nor did she carry the baby coming from Keventrenfa. Moreover, she put the bundle down after carrying it a few yards, declaring herself tired, so Billy had that to carry. I was sorry the poor woman's pleasure was so spoiled after your kind invitation for her Christmas enjoyment. The girl accompanied her to our house, and wanted to come again; but Mrs. Galliers slipped off when she was not at hand, grumbling to herself at the forward rudeness of the girl. Galliers offered to take her through the bush on her way home, but she said 'it did not matter, she would stay all night,' so they made her a shakedown on the floor beside themselves. He has taken her home this morning, and poor Mrs. Galliers says that she watched them pass our house, thinking it not impossible that the girl might call again. Mrs. Galliers adds, 'I've seen a many, but I never saw one like her.' Her husband had spoken well of the girl, but she thinks 'he'll change his mind now.'"

Poor Mrs. Bowen has a hard time of it just now. She can get no servants, and has been literally at the mercy of an unprincipled, malicious boy of fourteen, for three months or more. He has left her now, and she is thankful to be without him, though she is dependent upon a neighbour for everything, till she hears of some one else willing to take service. She is almost worn out, and writes me word that she is "wearying to be away." All these particular troubles of hers seem to me to be intended to bring down her spirit, and they are doing it; but there is a restlessness about her that cannot submit quietly to impositions. She tries to make her servants work her way, instead of letting them manage their own way; this puts them into opposition, and she gets no peace. However, she has a fine imagination, and a well-stored mind, and she always speaks and writes with the firmest faith in her Saviour,

so she has many happy hours and sunny feelings of thankfulness for "undeserved mercies." But hers does seem a solitary, forsaken lot. She has outlived most of her own family and friends, and the younger race do not seem to trouble themselves with the burden of her, yet she never mentions any of them without affection.

UMLIMBA, WIFE OF MAZABANI.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

January 7th, 1857.—I find I wronged our honest Caffre Tom in thinking that he might have taken our skewers for points. They are most carefully tied together, and placed at the very back of a long drawer. Poor fellow! I hope he is not killed; but we hear nothing of him, and it seems only too likely. Strange rumours of this war reach us. One says that Panda is being fattened for the first fruits of the victorious feast, and since then we hear that Panda has been the victor.

I had a present of a bottle of milk yesterday, an article not often to be had, and it afforded us a cup of good coffee. A Caffre brought a young buck, which I was tempted to buy to give to my brother for a pet, to expend his love upon while living all alone across the water, working and living hard. I found my young buck did not know how to eat, so I dipped my finger in gruel and let him suck it; but the creature showed a decided preference for the black kitten's ears, and as the kitten and he fraternized at once, in spite of sundry snaps of buck's little teeth, and consequent yells of pussy, I smeared pussy's head and ears with porridge and milk, and young buck licked them clean. The Caffre has brought in a prickly branch from which it nibbles the leaves. I shall keep it for a week to teach it to feed itself. It is a pretty grey buck, about a month old.

Our young monkey thrives, is very gentle, and not yet tricky, poor little thing. It could not have been more than a few days old when we got it, for the hair was not yet covering its body. Little Billy Galliers'

kitten has killed two of our pigeons. One was the mother of two newly hatched ones, which have been adopted by another and the old widower as we call the cock. So our pets are various.

January 13th.—TO MRS. BOWEN,—"You have sent us a beautiful fish, and we both beg to thank you for it. Mr. Feilden says when your Caffre stops so long away and neglects your business, you should take it off his wages as the only way to cure him. We are sending you some bottles full of water, for you may get none by-and-by, and ours is all running away. We neither of us feel very brilliant to-day, owing to the extreme heat. I got home yesterday in good daylight; Caffre John is a steady married man, and walked behind me quietly, with his assegai ready to do execution on any intruder. He fully appreciated my polite "Thank you," when I took the basket and bottle from him, for while I was standing in the garden with Mr. Feilden, he came up and presented me with a handful of gooseberries. So much for a smile. He is generally a gruff, dogged fellow, who will not bear a reproof. Mr. Feilden sends you a fine calabash, with his love. He says I shall not be jealous; I tell him not to be too sure, for I am jealous of his book sometimes."

January 15th.—Yesterday two of our neighbours rode up to spend the day, and while we were at dinner the colonial chaplain rode up and joined our impromptu party, greatly adding to the cheerfulness of the conversation. The heat is very oppressive; Leyland is quite weak and ill, and I am not good for much. One of our horses is disabled, so that I have scarcely been beyond our garden for some months. We talk of taking the wagon and going up to Richmond (where we spent a pleasant time two years ago). We are both greatly in want of change of air and scene, though we never tire of our own lovely spot and fine garden. We had 2000 pine-apples during the last twelve months. We had a splendid crop of papaws, of bananas a good number, and mulberries, with a quantity of young trees coming on for next season. Our guava-trees are

laden with fruit. We have one peach-tree, and a vine or two beginning to fruit, with more coming forward; but I fear the peaches are not a fine kind. The passion fruit we have had this year in great abundance, and various other fruits are growing. Orange-trees require a long time to mature, and some dishonest man has stolen a number of our young ones, picking them out from amongst the lemon-trees, which he left undisturbed. There are two loquat-trees that may fruit in a year; a few young apple grafts; and a nut-tree bearing a good nut, with some other fruits the names of which I do not know. One plant called corinda or Indian sorrel (hybiscus) bears a red fruit, full of thick gummy juice, which makes a very fine jelly; we put the seed of this in the ground only last year, and we hope it will fruit this year. Our fig-trees have not done well, but we have one superior fig-tree that looks very healthy. I do not think our pomegranates are of the right kind for eating; we have a hedge of them,—the fruit is very acid, full of seeds, the flower or blossom is lovely. The little crimson monthly rose—the only one that lived of those we brought out with us—borders each side of a walk, besides providing sundry bushes elsewhere, and flowers luxuriantly all the year round, with very little intermission. The brognantia, with its large, handsome, powerfully scented white bell flower, blooms four or more times a year, and is really magnificent, and so is the cardamum. W. Whittaker has given us a cutting from his fuchsia, which is shooting nicely. Our petunias are all puce and white, and they grow so well that I wish we had more varieties; we have to thin them now and then. The geraniums grow easily, and of these I often wish we had more varieties, ours being confined to rose colour, rose pink, and scarlet. The blue salvia seed has never come up, while the scarlet is almost like a weed. I think this climate has a preference for scarlet and yellow—many of the native flowers blending these in their strongest tints. The white chrysanthemums were very fine last year, but are less so this. From this enumeration may be pictured a very

good garden; if we could only keep it in proper style it would be a splendid garden; but one or two Caffres to weed, and a white boy, are all we have had for a long time, and they must do all the other work required.

We send three and a half miles for butcher's meat and groceries, and the only way we can insure speedy messengers is to give them no more than time to execute their errand and be back before dark. They do not like the bush in the dark.

January 16th.—My young buck continues to thrive, and his friendship with the kitten is as great as ever. It came close to me one evening as we sat at table, and I thought was rubbing its head for notice, when, putting my hand down, it caught my little finger, and set its teeth so firmly that I cried out, and had some difficulty to open its jaws to let me go after a good scratch that brought the blood. Then I found it had been amusing itself with sucking my dress, and in a marvellously short time had bitten a great hole in it. So my brother can have him when he likes!

January 23rd.—Neither of us are well, and we must get up into the cooler country as soon as my husband can get all his troublesome business arranged. He came home last night in the dark, having been detained. He had my mare, which has been so long ill that her footing was unsteady in the dark (as whose would not be in that bush-path?), and she rolled over with him, he alighting on his head, and getting a bad scratch on his nose. One of his spurs struck against something, and was knocked completely out of his boot. It was a very dark night. He is to be at the dinner to-night (Mr. Mellor being a personal friend), and talks of coming home after it, but I have begged him to accept the offered bed at the magistrate's house. There is no moon just now. I am quite alone to-day, Alec and Caffre John having taking some things that want repair, and the other Caffre has been sent up the country with a message. I could find plenty to do, but can only waste my time. I have just eaten luncheon, brown bread and butter, with passion-fruit jam, and a slice of

pine-apple after. I tried to draw the cork of a small bottle of porter, thinking I should be the better for half a glass, but in vain ; I had to give it up.

January 27th.—The flood of last year proved, sadly, more disastrous to us than we at first counted upon. It has completely upset us, and will bring us near to beggary. I will not enter into details, for not alone the hand of God has been laid heavily upon us, but also the hands of unprincipled worldly men.

We have decided on going to Richmond to our friends the Fearnes, and after staying a few days with them we may find some kind of hole or cobbler's hut again to receive us. My husband talks very decidedly of visiting England afterwards. The Smiths are to come back to Feniscowles, and live in our house, and Smith will farm the estate on his own account. This is the proposed programme ; we will see how it can be carried out. The Smiths are already installed in our kitchen. We have a gentleman, a Mr. Moodie, staying with us, and Mrs. Mellor talks of spending to-morrow with me if fine, so with all these various arrangements for house and journey there is plenty to do. The Smiths have brought their furniture, and ours must be moved to make room ; but Mrs. Smith and I can work hand in hand. She is first-rate.

We took our horses, and W. Whittaker drove our wagon, and we were soon most comfortably located with our friends, the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Fearne in their nice little cottage at Richmond. Our health began to recruit with the change and relaxation, and our hosts would not hear of our seeking shelter elsewhere. Mrs. Fearne is an excellent woman. She looks so gentle and delicate, you would think that she could rough nothing, but she is busy from morning to night, and is the main-spring of the house. She superintends the school, as well as her domestic affairs. We mean to take her back with us for a change. Vale Cottage is more than a mile out of Richmond, which is a mere apology for a village as yet, so we live very quietly, except that gentlemen drop in occasionally at meal-

times; one of whom, a Mr. McKenzie, invited us to ride to his farm, ten miles distant, and pass the day fishing and idling. The morning proved lovely, and the gentlemen assuring me I should not keep them back, I donned my habit, and we started before seven o'clock to ride ten miles for an appetite for breakfast. I found Mrs. McKenzie a very sweet young woman, with a house beautifully ordered and clean, and a fine fat little boy, who had been shown to us, on our former visit to Richmond, in long clothes. We enjoyed our day very much, but I was glad to get off an uncomfortable horse and saddle at night, when we reached home about dark.

"*March 2nd.*—Vale Cottage, Richmond. MY DEAREST MOTHER,—My heart is so full I do not know where to begin. The mail came in on Saturday evening, and brought us all your kind, affectionate, and interesting letters. But you must not draw such dreadful pictures of us—'toiling all the day long.' I assure you, Andrew has looked quite a different man, hearty and cheerful. He can eat anything now since he has been working so hard with his hands, and with hope before him. He can scarcely spare time to come and see us, he is so much interested in preparing his land for planting. When he made his appearance the day before his birthday, and I said, 'Ah, you are come that we may drink your health to-morrow,' he replied, 'I am not sure that I can stay, I want to get back, and only came for something I required.' It was the same answer the day before we came up into the country. I said, 'You have come to wish us good-bye.' 'No,' he replied, 'I thought you were gone, I wanted to see Smith.' I have just sent off a long note to tell him of our letters, and to promise him a reading of them when we return in a week or so. He must also attend to the boxes of good things we hear have arrived, which you have all been so happy in packing and sending off, and which we all shall enjoy together with real gusto. You must not fancy I '*try*' to write cheerfully; I am really cheerful. We have many heavy cares and vexations constantly

arising, and they weigh upon us for a time, and have doubtless made furrows and lines that should not otherwise have been, and I fear you will find me (should I return) aged and ugly, and Leyland haggard and careworn, owing perhaps to his having had too many irons to attend to at once. We both feel older; I feel twenty years older than when I left England five years ago; but in the midst of it all, we really are cheerful and happy, and can make jokes and fun yet, though, like the good Vicar of Wakefield's family, if they have not much wit, they produce a good share of laughter. Perhaps the purity of the climate prevents my feeling dull or sad, or brooding long over troubles, for a small thing makes us all merry. But my greatly increased deafness of late causes me to be quieter. One ear, which was my best, seems quite shut up, and naturally it makes me appear stupid at times. God's ways are not as man's ways, and there is many a blessing sent in disguise. We experience that here very closely at times, and I am trying more and more to feel communion with Christ in all my daily and hourly employments, wants, or occurrences. I try to realize this constant presence, but 'Little Faith' is a hindrance.

"I have just written the thoughts of my heart as they have come uppermost, and you must excuse the manner.

"E. and M. T. seem to be a composition of all manner of kindnesses and gifts, a real storehouse kept for the use of all around. It is a blessed way of enjoying the wealth God has given them, and it will be blessed in and to themselves. I have no ambition to possess great wealth; but to be able to dispense largely, if we can do it with humility and simplicity, is a great and enviable privilege.

"The weather in this climate (except on its few rainy days) is so clear and sunny, that I almost forget how cold I used to feel in England at this season, and how I used to wrap myself up for a double-quick walk to make the lazy blood circulate. I don't know how I should stand the English winters now, though it is true

that the summers here are too relaxing for my tender nerves. A shower-bath daily would do me good, but it cannot be had. Water is too scarce, having all to be carried uphill, except the rain-water we catch in the water-vats; and the fear of not having 'a good rainy day soon' makes that precious.

"I have said that I feel twenty years older since I came to this colony, through contact with human nature and its many trials. One sees so much of it here wherever we turn. People with small means struggling to make them do, and feeling themselves 'as good as you,' like the Americans—a spirit only to be overcome by frankness and genuine feeling, regardless of position. There are numbers of respectable people who were 'better off once,' and a good many who are better off now, especially in position, than ever they were in England. There are some, really ladies and gentlemen, who with the greatest difficulty and roughing can barely feed their families; and a sprinkling of poor clergymen's sons come out to push their way, working at carting, ploughing, building, or any other way to earn their daily bread. The man my brother has engaged to plough and work for him is a clergyman's son. W. W. has commenced as wagoner, to 'make a little ready money to pay Caffre wages,' while his brother is building up their house on the farm. Such a 'mixy-maxy' of society as you never came in contact with. In the midst of it all, a reflecting person cannot help learning some good lessons, and I cannot regret my five years' residence in Natal. It has opened my heart to classes that I could never have been thrown amongst in my position in England."

Lung sickness has been busy amongst the cattle. Out of forty cows that my husband had on Mr. Eastwood's farm only twenty are left, and others will die, I fear. The sheep farms seem likely to succeed.

We have been at Vale Cottage three weeks, and feel much better and stronger; that is, I do, for Leyland has been on horseback almost incessantly during ten days. There is a rumour that the bishop may preach at Rich-

mond next Sunday, and the schoolmaster is inspiriting his pupils to do their exercises well, under the expectation of their being submitted to his inspection. The village school was undertaken as a Government work by a Scotchman, who so entirely neglected his task, that the children were growing up in utter ignorance—very few even pretending to attend school. Good Mrs. Fearne took pity on them, and opened a school in her own house for such as chose to come. This increased so rapidly, from the good that accrued, that Mr. Fearne had a large hut raised and furnished with desks and forms just inside his garden for a schoolroom, and the bishop, seeing it was too much for Mrs. Fearne and Miriam to carry it on alone with all their other duties, has lately sent a trained teacher who takes a real interest in his task, and relieves the ladies greatly. Children of all ages up to seventeen are thankful to be taught, and they look as if the school was the pleasantest place they had to go to. Mrs. Fearne still goes daily and gives a lesson on different subjects, of which the pupils write an account from memory, some of them remarkably well.

My husband has set his heart on visiting England. He wants to see his mother again. She is near eighty years old, and he thinks a "wee cot" in the Highlands for a year would be a paradise, with a strong young woman to help me in the domestic department, and to milk the cow, &c. It is a vision! Amidst sylvan scenery, cool air, and gurgling brooks, with a fishing-rod and wallet, or a gun and game-bag, thick shoes and coarse clothes, and foregoing the refinements of cultivated society. Here, except in work, all is *abandon;* no style of fashion or dress to be studied, no state or ceremony at table or in the drawing-room. The master or mistress rises to supply the wants of the guests, and lays the cloth for dinner composedly—chatting the while—as neatly as your servant, and with less bustle sometimes. "Shall you mind having pudding first to-day?" asked my kind hostess, "because when we have pancakes, we generally have them first, so as to eat them while they are hot."

March 6th.—Craigie Burn. My husband and Mr. Fearne made an expedition further into the country towards Ladysmith. He says, in writing to me: "We had a lovely ride yesterday, I know nothing in England to compare it to except the wildest parts of Derbyshire. Where we now are is the very picture of some parts of Forfarshire and Aberdeenshire. This morning Mr. Fearne and Mr. Proudfoot, at whose house we are, rode to a farm about a horse, leaving me to cook the dinner, which I was to have ready by one o'clock. I cooked a beautiful dinner, but no one appeared till four o'clock, when three horsemen came in sight leading a horse. Mr. Fearne had completed his purchase, and he leaves 'Chaka' here. Being so late, we decided to remain another night at Craigie Burn. I gave them hodge-podge, a leg of a goat, potatoes and greens, all cooked in the only two iron pots in the establishment, besides six boiled mealie cobs, and had great praise awarded me. To-morrow we are to ride to John Boshoff's farm, then I go to Weenen, thence to Jacobus Potgieter's, and return, if possible, to Craigie Burn on Wednesday night to join Mr. Fearne again, on our return to Richmond and Vale Cottage."

There are no poor people, so called, about Richmond, yet many are very poor. I went into one cottage with Mrs. Fearne, a mere cabin, but strictly clean, where the woman, in writing to her friends in England, told them how well off she is here, that she never bought less than quarters of a pound of tea at a time. A goodly piece of raw beef hung over the door. Another woman told us how her husband had paid 11*l.* for some oxen ten days before, and that three of them had died since of lung sickness. We met the cobbler whose hut we occupied two years ago; he said he was going home to his "palace." We called it the "Black Dwarf's" house.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WE returned home in the beginning of April, taking Mrs. Fearne with us. Our journey of seventy miles occupied fully three days. We slept two nights in the wagon. It was sent off with our luggage and bed on Wednesday afternoon, and we overtook it next morning on horseback. Then our horses were led by a Caffre, and we entered the wagon, first sitting around it to eat our cold luncheon of bread and beef. Mr. Fearne convoyed us so far, and led back his wife's horse, the others had to go on. We ladies had a comfortable cartel and mattress inside, but the two gentlemen slept as they could, wrapped in furs and blankets outside the curtain, the ground not being safe that night. Next afternoon, my husband rode on home to make all ready for our reception, and we passed another night in the wagon, Wm. Whittaker, our driver, managing as he could again, outside. Unfortunately the wind rose, and one bit of our curtain could not be closed, so that my already influenza cold returned on my voice and carried it away. We reached home on Saturday at three p.m., and found my brother waiting to welcome us back. He was knocking off the tops of two boxes just arrived from friends in England, filled with good things for all of us. Lucky it was he did not delay longer, for a jar of preserves had got broken and was beginning to find its way to the spoiling of a pasteboard box containing sundry pretty articles of silk and other wearing gear. As it was, we saved the preserves and the dresses intact.

We had a busy week to begin with after our two months' absence. My brother had seen and fallen desperately in love with a pretty girl, the belle of the

colony, and he wanted our aid to forward his suit by calling upon and showing attention to the family of the young lady. There was no resisting him, so we ordered our horses and made the call. We were quite won over by the gentle, modest manners of the sweet young girl, so thoughtful and sensible looking, and as there could be no objection to the connection, if the parties were willing (she was a lady born and bred), it ended in our inviting a party to spend the day, and asking the young lady to come and stay with me, that she might see more of my brother before making up her mind, as the plea of short acquaintance was all that could be urged against the match. It all ended happily, as I shall show hereafter; but I must return from this digression.

I cannot pretend to enumerate all the good things, as well as beautiful and useful, that filled our boxes, sent and packed by loving friends at home. A stereoscope likeness of dear Lady Feilden took us quite by surprise. It is a beautiful likeness, and this wonderful instrument brings her before us in calm and peaceful thought, with an open letter (possibly her son's) in her hand. How I should like to possess such an one of my own mother. There were presents also for dear Mrs. Bowen, among them an Etna lamp from Lady Feilden (who has become interested in her through my descriptions, and who is very nearly the same age, seventy-nine or eighty), to enable the old lady to have a cup of warm coffee at any hour in the night or morning, when her lazy, selfish servant declines getting up in time. She is greatly delighted, and has written a letter of thanks and a few pretty verses on the subject, which she sent to my husband to approve or correct.

We made a nice little gathering at her cottage one day, to partake of the communion, in Easter week. There were six of us, and Archdeacon Mackenzie rode over from Isipingo on purpose to administer the sacrament.

A second sister of the archdeacon's has come out from England, full of enthusiasm and ardour, to learn

the Caffre language and become a missionary. Her brother says she goes about with pencil and paper to pick up as she goes along and learn.

All the "grey sisters" the bishop brought out are dispersed. We do not know all the reasons, but we fancy the bishop is not a good financier, and that he finds money will not go quite so far as he expected. Two of the "sisters" are married. One is just now embarking for England, and another, an elderly lady, is seeing her off, paying her passage, and supplying any deficiency in her wardrobe from her own purse. This lady, Miss Townsend, wearies people with doing good. Her time, thoughts, and money are all devoted to assisting others. My husband called on her with Mrs. Fearne (our guest), and both were delighted with her, and she is going to call on us at Feniscowles on her way to Isipingo to stay with the Mackenzies. I am told that her berth on board ship seemed never slept on; it was filled with books and other people's things. The sailors dreaded her, for she was on deck all night.

I was told that Mr. Ashe Windham made a very clever caricature on board of one of the bishop's young ladies, who, smelling fire one night, and having imprudently left a lighted candle near some papers, found them on fire. She rushed out of her cabin in her nightdress, calling "Mr. Archdeacon! Mr. Archdeacon!" (it seems that in all emergencies they called for him.) Mr. Archdeacon did not come quickly enough, but Mr. Windham appeared in night attire and allayed the alarm, so the caricature represents himself peeping out of his berth in his nightcap, pointing his finger very reprovingly at the young lady, and saying, "Now remember, if you ever do so again, you're to be put overboard."

April 21st.—I have been busy this morning, with Mrs. Smith and Friday's help, bottling some light beer we made yesterday. It is my first trial, and if it succeed will be a very palatable, refreshing drink, and easily made, so long as I use Boer's meal for my brown bread. The bran, sifted with a handful of hops, a little brown sugar, and a good deal of water, boiled well together,

and afterwards fermented with yeast, makes the beer, which will be ready for use in two days. I have been very successful making vinegar from the washings of sugar-bags, and also from over-ripe pine-apples, but for an English housekeeper I shall be quite at a loss, and shall have everything to learn over again.

April 27th.—On Saturday, our pleasant visitor, Mrs. Fearne, went into Durban to spend the day with a friend, and my husband and I were left alone. We made a good luncheon, and agreed it should be our dinner and thus save more cooking. We were prepared for a quiet afternoon, which we were in the midst of enjoying, strolling about leisurely in the garden, when up came my brother with a "What time are you going to dine?" I explained the case, and said he should have a hungry tea very soon. In five minutes, up rode another gentleman to dine and stay all night; he also had to be put off with a hungry tea, beef and cheese, &c. I went in, laid the table, made the tea, and it grew dusk. "Mrs. Fearne must certainly be staying all night in Durban," was scarcely out of my mouth, when Mrs. Smith came to me and said, "Here is Mrs. Fearne just ridden up with another lady!" "Oh, dear!" thought I, "what shall I do?" I went out and welcomed the lady, who proved to be Miss Townsend. Mrs. Fearne had come up to her near the entrance to our bush-path. She was on her road to the Isipingo station, and wished to take our house and Sea View (Mrs. Heathcote's) *en route*. I sent Mr. Feilden to help the ladies with their horses, and ran in to place two more seats and all necessaries at the tea-table, and we enjoyed a very pleasant evening. I slipped away when I could, planned how we should have enough meat for all for Sunday, and after they had all said "good-night," I mixed a famous loaf, and set it to rise to be baked before breakfast. I rose early, cooked a substantial breakfast with scones for six persons, and we did very well. The two gentlemen left after breakfast, but another arrived for dinner, and we passed a very quiet Sunday, reading the service as usual. This morning, the ladies and two gentle-

men are gone to call at Sea View, one to go on to the Umlaas with escort, so I am left for a quiet morning. My husband has to be in Durban, so he must give the lady into a Caffre's charge after leaving Sea View.

So soon as they were all away, I walked up to poor Mrs. Galliers to see her baby, and condole with her. The child was taken very ill on Saturday afternoon, and excellent Mrs. Smith was a good deal there yesterday, putting it in a warm bath, and administering other remedies. The child looks very ill indeed, and Galliers came home with a swelled face in pain, so the poor wife has had no rest either of mind or body. My troubles are nothing to hers, for I feel so much support under mine, and have always a kindly, loving word or look from my dear husband, which makes things easy. He is again talking of our going home and visiting our dear friends in England, but I never allow myself to dwell upon the thought, so many things may occur to prevent its fulfilment. We both of us require rest for overstrained minds and bodies. The monotony of the long sea voyage seems in my thoughts a luxury to look forward to. Only we shall return much poorer than when we set out.

May 7th.—We have been very busy packing up to be ready in case we do go to England, and we are sending away a good many articles we do not require, which would only spoil if left here. Good Mrs. Smith helps and lets her boys help, but she has plenty to do for her own family (she makes all their clothes and does the housework also). Her boys are required for out-door work. I had another unaccountable fit during the night, but a hard day's work and overstrained mind may have been the cause. I am well again to-day, though heavy, and am working harder than ever. It must be done, so there is no use making a fuss about it.

Yes! Our visitor was Miss Heathcote; she goes home to-day. We make no concealment of the fact, though we do not tell people that my brother and she are regularly engaged to each other, and we invited the young lady to stay with us to give them better oppor-

tunities of learning each other's dispositions, as well as to enable ourselves to know more of her. I think she is a very good girl, and ladylike, and that she will make my brother an excellent wife, and I think none the less of her for having shown reserve and backwardness before making up her mind. She seems a well-principled, affectionate, thoughtful girl, and we are very well pleased it should be so, for my brother might have chanced on one far otherwise, and a bachelor's life is a very dull one in the bush. Mrs. Fearne is still with us, and so is W. Whittaker, whose leg forbids him driving the wagon up to Richmond as yet.

May 10th.—We had a call from the Rev. Mr. Crompton on Friday; we got into a regular argument upon the Holy-week ceremonies at Rome, which he defended in a manner I thought unbecoming a clergyman of the Church of England. He told me it was because I did not fully understand or enter into the meaning of the various ceremonies, that I could not properly enjoy them, so I replied that I had enjoyed them, and so had I enjoyed the opera, without fully understanding it. I felt very indignant, but fortunately remembered the danger of losing my temper, though I felt getting hot. He instanced the beauty of that imposing ceremony of the Holy Week, the washing of the pilgrims' feet, and wished we would follow their example. Mr. Feilden (who loves a joke) regrets he did not bring in Friday, the Caffre, and a tub of water, and ask him to commence there and then! I asked what humility he saw in the Pope sprinkling water from a golden ewer on the feet of twelve monks, chosen for the performance, and then presenting them each with the elegant napkin with which he had touched the foot? He replied that there was no pretence in Don Miguel (I think he said) scrubbing the beggars' feet; he wished I had seen the old gentleman doing it so heartily. I said I had seen royal and noble ladies do the same, and I had seen the old dowager Queen of Naples, with a beggar on each arm, walking through the midst of us, who went on purpose to see the sight, she hoping, doubtless, to have washed

away a good many of her sins by the display. Mr. Crompton replied that he wished our Queen would exercise a little more humility and religion, for when she went to Paris she was of no religion at all. I really feared lest Victoria might have been led to give her countenance or presence to something wrong, so I asked, "How was that?" "At least," he replied, "she had no chaplain with her." "Oh!" I said rather satirically, "I did not know a chaplain was *necessary* to religion. I am sorry to find you think so much of forms and ceremonies." Mr. Feilden, finding the subject likely to get rather serious, proposed to adjourn to the garden, upon which I laughed and said, "Yes, you had better go, for you and I will never agree." So we shook hands, and I saw him no more. I heard of him afterwards as preaching somewhere about Pine Town in a scarlet surplice. But here have I been wasting my time writing of this foolish story, when I should have been salting the legs of the buck I got to-day, to make "beltung," to eat on the passage home!

May 11th.—We have all been watching a *red* moon, lying, as it seemed, on the edge of the ground. Mr. and Mrs. Mellor rode up, just in time for the beautiful and singular sight, and we paced up and down the terrace-walk for a long time, watching the rising, clearing, and light of the moon. I like Mrs. Mellor; there is the germ of a fine character in her. Our dear Mrs. Fearne is still with us, but anxious now to find an opportunity and escort to return to Richmond. We shall part from her with regret; we have now been several months together in the most intimate companionship.

May 22nd.—Feniscowles. The *Jane Morice* has brought me a charming letter from a dear sister, just three months after its date, so the little vessel has made another good passage. Leyland hopes so to arrange our affairs that we may go back to England in her for a year or more; and, though I doubt if we shall get away at all, I do everything with the thought prominent of "If we go." For instance, I have prepared a travelling-skirt, and remodelled my bonnet more in shape of those I see in the

Illustrated Times, so as to be fit to land and pass on without all the people staring at last century's fashions. If we do not go, my snugger little bonnet may lay by for the next five years, by which time possibly none at all will be worn.

The sugar estate looks well this year, as if it would redeem itself. My brother brings word that he has seen some most beautiful sugar being made there. There is last year's leeway to be made up, but there is hope in the good beginning of a new season.

My brother is looking uncommonly well. He is literally full of his own prospects and hopes; and well he may be so, for he is to become a Benedict in less than a week! I hope all will go well with him. In a land like this, he will be happier and more comfortable with a wife than without. Andrew may in one sense be blinded by the little god, but in another he has his eyes open, and thinks he is prepared to meet everything. In reply to a question of mine as to the usefulness of the lady he has chosen, he said he never saw any one get through so much work as Georgina, except Mary Whigham. We hear a very good account of her from all quarters, and I liked her manners and behaviour during her week's visit to us.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

I MUST give the account of the wedding here, as I find it written in a letter to my dearest mother, June 2nd.

"The 26th of May was fixed for the bridal day, and a large party of friends were asked to assemble and witness. Andrew invited Mr. Fearne, as the first friend he had made in the colony, to bring his daughter Miriam from Richmond, and himself tie the knot. Dear, bright Miriam was enchanted to come to the wedding, and her father was flattered and pleased that my brother did not forget him.

"It was agreed that on the morning of the marriage, which was to take place in the prettily situated little church in Claremont Grounds, about a mile from Mrs. Heathcote's house of Sea View, the bridegroom, with Daniel Whittaker as groomsman, and Leyland, should ride to the church, while we three ladies and Mr. Fearne should go in Mr. Fearne's covered cart, and—odd as it will sound to your ears—the parson driving six in hand, and moving at the rate of three or four miles an hour. It was at least safer to be drawn in a cart by steady oxen, than in a carriage with four horses. A lovely road our bush-path was. The distance to the church must have been five miles, and my brother frightened us all so about the time, to hurry us, that I was quite in a fidget lest we should really be too late for Mr. Fearne to marry them before twelve o'clock. However, we found ourselves among the first arrivals. The clergyman of the church, the Rev. Mr. Robertson, and his wife, were there, and they had as far to ride as we. Mrs. Fynn, Mr. Phillipps (uncle of the bride), and some neighbours were chatting, gaily dressed, in the pretty

field in which the little church lies. Presently others arrived, and the riders tied their horses under a large old tree, laying their saddles down on the grass. Presently up rode my husband, looking so nice, wearing Mary's red cap. There was quite a variety in the hats and caps of the gentlemen (one helmet was amongst them), and Leyland's looked really distinguished and foreign, with its handsome blue tassel and band. After chatting near an hour with different people, there was a sensation of something particular, and a cavalcade of gentlemen on horseback approached from the Sea View side of the church. It was the bridegroom with his escort of groomsmen. Each gentleman unsaddled his own horse in one moment, and up we all went to meet the bridegroom. By-and-by the white covers of the wagon were visible on the road below, and the gentlemen went to the gate to escort the bride and her party.

"My brother did not look anything like his best; people had been remarking how handsome he would look, but he was nervous and pale. The bride looked very nice in white net over sarcenet (she was her own dressmaker), with a wreath of orange blossoms, and a large lace veil thrown over the whole. Miriam Fearne and the bride's two young sisters were bridesmaids, the latter in white frocks and hats, with bridal favours.

"We nearly filled the little church, for besides the grown-up company there were a heap of little children, and some Caffre school-children, pupils of Mr. Robertson, who came to see the show, dressed in blue checked shirts, tied in at their waists. One little chubby fellow, about four years old, clung to Mrs. Robertson as if she were his nurse. The 'happy pair' were at last united, the bride looking quite composed and happy, promising to be obedient before she was asked; as Mr. Fearne remarked, she got before him.

"A wagon had the honour of conveying the *nouveaux mariés* back to the house for the *déjeûner en suite*, with three or four others, and a number of horsemen, or outriders I ought to call them. The cold collation was liad on a temporary table under the branches of an

enormous old tree, and the guests walked down to the spot through groves of magnificent orange-trees, laden with fruit, and avenues of fine banana-trees.

"I must inform you, my dear mother, that the Wesphalian ham and two of the Russian tongues went to the breakfast, and were excellent, and that Mrs. Smith cooked them at our house, along with a young turkey, and that I made a substantial and capital curry pie, for all which helps they were very glad, for they had all quite enough to do. I was surprised that Mrs. Heathcote should attempt to have more than relations at the marriage, but there were some kind neighbours who lent glass, spoons, forks, &c., who could not be left out, and one led to another being invited. The bridesmaids came from a distance, and their brothers must be asked, so we mustered more than thirty grown persons at breakfast, and a lot of children, who trotted behind the seats from one to another, getting a bit everywhere. My husband was asked suddenly to take the head of the table, rather to his discomfiture, while Mr. Phillipps was at the bottom, with me at his left hand. My husband acquitted himself very well, indeed I thought the day owed a good deal of its success to his determined cheerfulness in carrying it off well. I was told (for, of course, at the distance I could not hear) that he made a very neat little speech, proposing the health of the bridegroom and bride, spoke of having long known my brother, and said that a dutiful son and affectionate brother could hardly fail to make a good husband. Andrew replied very nicely, bringing in his friend Mr. Fearne's name—as marrying them—very prettily, as the first friend he found in Natal. But all things come to an end, and so must a wedding dinner, for such it was in fact to all there, and tolerably hungry you will allow them to be after a long early ride or weary wagon drive, so that it was near two o'clock before we sat down to eat. After seeing the couple off (the bridesmaids throwing old shoes after them), we proposed to inspan and commence our journey home, when some of the young people begged for a dance

'under the green-wood tree,' and one gentleman volunteering as musician on the accordion, we all adjourned once more to the scene of the feast. The young men who had put up the table the evening before, speedily pulled it to pieces to make more space; a quadrille was tried, then a waltz; we married ladies sitting under the branches. A Scotch reel was then proposed, and Leyland dragged me up to set it going, 'because I knew it thoroughly,' though I tried to plead my inability to hear the music sufficiently well.

"At last our 'six-in-hand' got home, just as the sun was setting. We found my husband, on his horse, had been at home a full hour by a shorter track. On his road in the morning he had called in on Mrs. Bowen, to show himself. He found her in the act of watching with eager interest the white canvas of some of the wagons, as seen a long distance off on the road below her. She was exclaiming 'There they go, I see the wagon.' It was a pleasant peep for her; her romance would supply the rest, and her versatile and elastic mind would afford many a beautiful *simile* with appropriate recollections and anecdotes.

"You will wonder, my dear mother, where your son took his wife for the honeymoon, or if straight to his farm. He hired a couple of rooms in a cottage on the Berea (a wooded hill of great beauty round the bay, where houses are springing up) for a fortnight, the woman of the house to attend on them. We have not seen them since—it was a week yesterday—but I had a very happy note from Andrew, who is perfectly satisfied with everything. They are half-way between our Feniscowles and his farm, and had ridden across the river Umgeni one day to see the place, and had lunched off bread and some of your 'delicious black-currant jam.' My brother said everything was looking so nice, and the hut so comfortable; so I wonder almost that they do not go straight home, superintend any extra building he talks of making, postpone their proposed trip to Graham's Town by steamer for another year, and

put the money so saved into their new house. However, I have not said a word in the matter, and possibly a journey put off is as good as given up, and Andrew may be trusted to guide his own barque; at all events he must learn by experience now. If Georgie only prove prudent he will escape many troubles, having our experience before him; but, as Leyland says, 'There are wheels within wheels in Natal, and an upright man cannot imagine them.' We have learned to know a little of the wickedness of the world in our experience of Natal life; but one thing I have learned which I often suspected in England, that with a few necessary externals secured, happiness and real enjoyment of life must come from within, rather than from without. My life during the last five years has been so real, so full of action and employment, that Mary's last letter, describing all the gaiety and balls, seems to my work-day ideas like a whirl of folly, dissipation, and loss of time. My English friends wonder that, living my simple, quiet life in the wilderness, I can make my letters so interesting. To me it seems as if nature, and the observation of new characters undisguised by cultivation and polish, afford infinitely more variety than a round of fashionable life. I can still understand the enjoyment in dancing—there is something so springy and luxurious in the motion—but life seems made for something more serious than to be passed in a succession of balls and great dinners; for these, with the consequent calls, and dressings, and rests, and fashions, all to be given way to, must fill up nearly all the day and all the thoughts. I begin to be afraid to pass my time lightly, and, in truth, I find pleasure in a simpler life and more serious concerns. I scarcely read a novel, lest I should become too much interested and leave some duty undone. I do not think I can ever again lose sight of the real business of life, its end, and my interest in it, nor do I desire to do so. It is worth thinking about.

"Leyland has offered my brother the use of our house while his is being built, unless they prefer living in his

nice hut on the spot, to speed the builders by their presence, which is what I would do. Mrs. Fearne was over there for two nights, and said she could live very comfortably in his hut. The nice canisters, all filled, too, will make them feel quite independent. He has still a large piece of a truly good cheese left, he tells me, but we have made a good hole in it, for he has distributed to several who have been more or less attentive to him. A cheese like that is a luxury out here, and so very handy if visitors come in unexpectedly to get something to eat, as so often happens with us.

"Beef, which is the staple flesh meat, costs 2*d.*, 2½*d.*, or 3*d.* per pound according to the joint: a whole leg is 9*d.* We make the liquor of the boiled meat into soup, thickened with rice, or vermicelli, or pumpkin, &c. Cold meat we hash or curry; curry is cheap here. We do not trouble about puddings much, having no milk and often few eggs to spare, but we boil rice and some of our fruits with a little sugar, which every one likes. Only brown sugar is used in the colony; you rarely see any other. We get a sack of rice at a time, and a sack of flour (this time it is Boer's meal which makes good brown bread). At this season our garden supplies so much manioc, which takes the place of potatoes, and of bread in a great measure, that a single good-sized loaf has sometimes lasted a week, when we have been by our two selves. The tea and sugar perhaps feel company the most; I cannot always measure the quantity that will be required. Tea is liked at all meals, and the cold tea left in the teapot or silver kettle on a side-table makes a most refreshing drink in a hot climate. Often our visitors drink nothing but water.

"We had some good porter from Liverpool which I sometimes take. I find it agrees with me, and I sometimes think I am deafer if long without it.

"So our actual house expenses are very small. Occasionally we vary our dinners with fowls, which cost 6*d.* each; these we feed up for a few days, or allow them to run about to pick up insects, &c. Latterly the fisherman

has now and then sent up a good dish of fish, generally small mullet, of which we get twenty for *6d.* The fine fruits from our garden supply us with desserts, and luncheon is a bit of bread and cheese, or butter, or preserves. This year we have ventured to preserve a little of a new fruit from India, the corinda, which grows well here. We hope to take some of it home for you to taste.

"We stayed with the Fearnes, at Richmond, nearly as long as they stayed with us, and we never saw anything stronger than tea or coffee on the table. So you see we are not extravagant, though required to be rather hospitable.

"I have given Andrew two pairs of excellent new sheets from those we got at Satterfield's. These, with his own set, will be plenty for a beginning; and I gave Georgie the shawl I bought in Paris, being so well stocked myself that this just lay in my box, and it will serve her for a best warm shawl for many a day.

"Yesterday her mother, Mrs. Heathcote, made a party to go across the river to spend the day on my brother's farm. I wish I could give you a better idea of localities. In one of the *Illustrated News* (4th of April, I think, 1856 or 1857) there is an excellent representation of the Bay of Durban and the Bluff—the town on one side and the islands in the bay. Our Feniscowles house catches a peep of the corner of the bay. The hill on the property from which I took my first sketch commands a splendid panoramic view with the bay and open sea beyond in front. This is the spot where we are to build our stone house when we may have one! The Umgeni river is behind Durban and falls into the sea; it will not do for transport of goods. My brother's farm is on the other side of the Umgeni, which is generally fordable there, except at high tides. You need not fear alligators; a Caffre has been bitten, I believe, but I never heard of accidents to white men, beyond what we are liable to anywhere in one shape or other. Poor Mrs. Burrop, in crossing a much smaller and more insig-

nificant stream on horseback at the time of the flood, was drowned close up at the bank. Her husband clinging to the saddle, and exclaiming, 'I think you are safe now,' let go his hold and fell back into the river. He was no swimmer, but he got safe to land, and looking out for his wife, could not find her; her body was recovered. She was a beautiful, fair young Dutch-woman.

"The large supply of working articles my friends have sent me from England enables me to be generous to my neighbours, who are all glad of a few good needles and pins. I can stock my new sister's work-box. I made her a needle-case like the one Mary S. K. made for me, which is in daily use. It is as well not to have too many steel articles, they rust so quickly. When the Caffres want needle and thread they come to me. I give them my commoner thread, and needles showing signs of rusting; they rub them smooth, and are very glad of them. I have become very careful in these small matters, and sometimes fear growing into a very screw.

"The Fearnes left us to make their journey of seventy miles in a rough covered cart. Mr. Hawkins had begged them to bring his wife's sister back with them, and Mr. Fearne had promised to do so. Miss Grice rode up on Wednesday evening to be ready to go with them in their little well-packed cart, and if they did not reach the station-houses they must all sit up on their seats all night—a stretch of kindness to Miss Grice, I think, more than I should have liked to give. They must work hard to get to Richmond by Saturday night, that Mr. Fearne may be ready for his Sunday's duties. The previous Sunday he had kindly officiated in our parlour. I was sorry we did not know in time to send for Mrs. Bowen, who would have greatly valued the privilege. The dear old lady had remembered the bride with a sealed packet, which was presented after her marriage, and Miriam said she was particularly gratified and pleased with it, and by the manner of the gift.

"I should not omit to say that, in order to be present at the marriage of her friend; one young lady, Miss Moodie, with one of her brothers, rode 160 miles in six days. The ladies ride fearlessly. Another lady, dressed in a fashionable deep blue and white stamped gauze, white lace mantilla, and elegant bonnet, rode six miles with her habit on the top of all, and no crushing of dress was visible. The day could not have been more lovely."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WE are not particularly well suited with servants. On our return after a short walk, we found both our Caffres had disappeared, and no work was done. I rang the great bell to call Friday from his hiding-place, but no Friday appeared. I rang again, and presently down rushed Smith and his wife from the far end of the forage field, where they were reaping, in a fright lest their little daughter Margaret, who was left in charge of the house, should be on fire; so a fine commotion I created. When Smith learned the cause, he too began to ring the bell, but soon stopped for fear of alarming his son and the Caffres at their work, and all the host coming to see what was wrong. After an absence of three and a half hours Friday re-appeared with an armful of wood for a pretence, and his hair all metamorphosed, having undergone a regular dressing from the other absentee during the three hours' truancy.

June 26th.—Poor Alec Smith has blinded himself with his cart whip, and has been ill for two or three days. He hopes to go to his work again on Monday, and I trust no serious injury has been done to his sight. The lash cut across his eyelids, and he is only now beginning to see again.

"Feniscowles, *June 28th.*—MY DEAR MRS. BOWEN,—I must not go to bed to-night without thanking you for more than one interesting letter, and comforting as showing that your mind is regaining its peace, and rejoicing in thoughts and feelings of praise and thankfulness in the midst of your solitude. Is not a trouble thus turned into a blessing? This self-schooling, and

the hard tasks we are all learning to conquer, are perhaps a glorious battle, when victory is won over pride by humility, and over discontent by thankfulness, over fear by hope, and over mistrust by simple faith. My husband often reminds me of the many mercies we daily receive; and only to-day he spoke of how all our wants have been so constantly and graciously supplied, with luxuries and superfluities added, proving to us that we are never forgotten, and that our place of trust should not be in the bank! I am amazed sometimes at his calm composure, and gentle submission to untoward circumstances, because I know it does not arise from indifference or want of acute feeling. Shall we not bless our trials if they are working so great a work within us? Are they not 'blessings in disguise?' And yet some of them are hard to bear, and would be harder doubtless if our conscience rebuked us. Not that any of us can stand clear in the sight of God; I do not mean that, for that would indeed be presumption, but there is a 'balm' in feeling, like David, 'our hands are clean' of this or that offence.

"Thank you, dear Mrs. Bowen, for sending your 'midnight meditations' so beautifully versed; mine are so prosy (when sleep allows me any) and so matter of fact and heavy, that they would not stand beside yours. The feelings and imagery of a poet's mind are so keen and varied, so flowery I may say, that they are not enjoyed without a penance. What depths and despondencies often succeed! The Rev. Robert Montgomery told me he often watered his pillow with the tears of feeling. But there are some eyes that rarely find the relief that a good flood of tears will bring at once.

"Mr. Feilden is glad you enjoy the cheese, as much as we have done the tongue you sent. There is still a wee taste of it left for to-morrow's breakfast. Mrs. Galliers brought a very good account of you, and the state of your larder. 'She really thinks you do better without the man.' If you want anything more cooked, please ask me to do it. Would you like another fowl roasted? If the hens would lay, I might

make you a pudding, but without either eggs or milk that is not easy. I hear the cocoa-nut oil is very hard this cold weather, and requires warm water to liquefy it, so the Etna is rendered useless. Mr. Feilden thinks a commoner oil would answer, though, of course, the cocoa-nut oil is the best and nicest.

"Thank you for the journal, we mean to read it aloud. Mr. Feilden dipped into it to-night and became interested; he is reading his favourite Cumming's 'Apocalypse.' He will like to read your thoughts on the 'Pleasures of Memory.'

"I cannot quite fancy white ants as a delicacy, though I do not see why they should not be good. It is prejudice in us; you should see Friday with fish! I cannot persuade him even to touch one to clean it for me, and when Mr. Feilden in fun offered him a piece from our table, the look of disgust was inimitable. And now I must say good-night, and may pleasant pictures and thoughts solace your wakefulness. Yours affectionately,

"E. W. FEILDEN."

Sunday Morning.—"DEAR MRS. BOWEN,—How are all your aches? I thought of them this morning as I washed all over in real cold water, and wrapped my flannel-lined dressing-gown round me; it was made for English winters, but I find it useful here. I wondered if you had such a wrap. It would be a comfort at nights, when you sit at your table, reading—and fireless. The Caffres are all paralyzed with the cold; we can get nothing like work from them. Friday keeps up a good fire for us, and any work about the fire he does with gusto; but nothing else, though the very exercise would keep them warm if they would but try. Mr. Feilden complains of back-ache—from cold, I conclude. I wonder if I am sufficiently grateful for my good health, freedom from pains, and great flexibility of limbs, as well as cheerfulness of spirit, which has been so graciously bestowed on me to make up for want of hearing? What personal luxuries and comforts I enjoy, too! In your 'Night of Weeping' I came on a page that strikes me forcibly. 'Riches cannot help, nor earthly comfort

avail us in the hour of need. They cannot heal the living, nor bring back the dead.' 'Selfishness in reference to things of Christ springs from coldness towards Christ Himself; it is placing self before, or in the place of Christ.' Are we not apt to think we are working for Christ when really we are making work a substitute for Christ? Still, it is dangerous to take quite an opposite way of viewing works; I do not know but that it is the better fault of the two, for Christ will peep through activity, but be hidden in indolence and self-indulgence. Now it is time for prayers; so adieu, with much love, commending you to the Lord."

Mr. Robertson came home with us and saw the manioc growing. I fortunately had some cooked, which I fried for luncheon, and he greatly approved it.

July 21st.—My brother and his young wife came to us two days ago, she with a bad cold. I taxed the ball with it, but she said she had it before she went. She enjoyed the ball very much, and danced all night. I can enjoy a good dance myself with a good partner and stirring music.

July 27th.—It really looks like going to England now, perhaps in the *Jane Morice*, which may be detained still a week in harbour. We are busy preparing.

July 31st.—All our boxes must be in Durban tomorrow by 10 a.m., in order to be shipped within the bay, rather than sending them to the outer anchorage. Then, whenever the wind is fair for sailing, we must start. When our boxes are off I hope we may not be detained long. My brother will occupy our house till his own is ready, riding to and from his farm. He was there yesterday, returning this evening to our dinner, consisting of roast pork, manioc (for potatoes), rice, and two splendid pine-apples, between six people. I wished we could have sent some of our friends a few dozen pines gratis. The weather being colder than usual, ripe pines are scarce, but we shall take a great sackful of green ones to ripen and eat on the voyage. I wish the bananas and papaws would keep to show our friends in England. There is one bunch of papaws, clustering

round the top of a single-stemmed tree under its umbrella of leaves, on which I have counted sixty of the fruit, some of them the size of a small head, and diminishing to that of a small turnip.

July 28th.—The Government is giving large grants of land to almost any one who asks, in order to induce immigration, on very easy terms. The consequence is that those who hold bought lands find their property very much depreciated in value for the present, and, if they wish to sell, it must be at a sacrifice. This will affect my husband's sales of land, which the loss caused by the great flood of last year obliges him to sell at once. Through being fine land for sugar-growing, it is sure to rise in value after a time.

I have been looking out my voyage costume, to save washing on ship-board; and to-morrow will be an awful day, separating what will be wanted on the passage, what will be required for a few visits on first landing, what may be soldered up, what left behind, and what papers may be destroyed. I have been writing farewell notes to one or two ladies in the colony. This sounds like going; still there is many a slip betwixt the cup and lip, and I do not feel sure yet. Mrs. Heathcote has kindly sent us a quantity of green lemons for a beverage on the voyage, and our old neighbour, Mrs. Bowen, also sent a few. She will be very lonely now we are going away, she cares for so few about her. We asked her to return with us to England, promising to take care of her on the voyage, and to see that she should get safely and comfortably to her friends in Wales; but she could not make up her mind to leave Natal at her great age. She said very few of her old friends and companions would be alive, and the younger generation would not care for her. Our excellent farmer's wife, Mrs. Smith, will willingly go over now and then. She has sense and tact, and may be both useful and agreeable; but she fears it may be deemed intrusion on her part. My dear Mrs. Fearne is too far off to be of any use. I never met with any, except one very old lady, who had all her passions so completely under

Christian control. That old lady, however, beat her out and out, for instead of the solemn, smileless countenance, when passive her face was beaming with love and beauty. Even after her memory failed, and she grew into second childhood, that childishness was all amiable. She has gone to her rest now, but not her good works; I think that they commenced on this earth. May ours commence here too!

The shareholders of the Springfield Sugar Estate voted that Mr. Feilden "had been hardly dealt with," and wished to give him a ton of sugar to sell in London. This, for reasons of his own, he declined to receive, but the offer comforted him.

"*August 1st.*—MY DEAR MRS. BOWEN,—We may yet have many last words, and they seem as if they would never come to an end. My heart grows warmer each minute as the time draws nearer. My husband says he does not deserve all you say of and to him, and really the gold seems coming out of the furnace purer. I hope it will get no new dross by mixing with many metals in England. Our luggage was all away this morning soon after seven, and now it will certainly be uncomfortable if we are detained much longer, with our clothes gone except what can go in a bag. We are taking great bunches of bananas; how I wish one splendid bunch would keep to show them in England. Smith has found a sackful of pine-apples; I thought we had not above a dozen or two. We have two hen-coops filled for our eating, and have had such hard work, and been in such a bustle, that now, when all are gone, except the female portion of the household, and the room has been well cleaned, it sounds quite still, i. e. if stillness can sound?

"We had a houseful last night; breakfast was ready for them, prepared by my own fair hands, by a little after seven. Mrs. Smith had as much to do as she could superintend for her half of the house, or two houses rather, and moreover she gave all the four gentlemen and myself a cup of hot coffee from her table to begin with.

"I was so busy yesterday morning that I forgot to think of luncheon or any eatables, till my husband asked 'If I could give them something to eat'—four persons in all. 'Oh, yes,' said I, wondering at the same time what it was to be, for the bread was nearly finished, the meat quite so, the cheese no bigger than a finger or two, and all forgot! I went into the kitchen where the Smiths were at a very comfortable dinner, with a large dish of meat and rice. I told my dilemma.

"'Oh, we have finished; will you take this? it is quite good.'

"'Oh, thank you; but a part of it will do.'

"'It can go as it is; we have finished.'

"'And can you spare me a little rice too?' They required no more, but looked a little doubtful of offering the dish of broken rice, so I said it was quite nice, if they would let me have it. So it was put on a clean dish, and we had a capital feast—all hungry with our forenoon's work. So I mean to tell my good man the next time he tells me I have never wanted a meal, that I had to beg my dinner once!

"How I do rattle on, and I do not mean to give it up; I mean, if well enough, to begin a long letter on shipboard, and spin a long, verbose, egotistical yarn, and am vain enough to believe it will be welcomed at Keventrenfa.

"Mr. Lamport says the *Jane Morice* will certainly not sail before Monday, and that most likely it will be Tuesday or Wednesday. Does that mean Thursday or Friday? It is waiting for the mail, and shall we benefit? I shall come again soon to see you, and only write this to take advantage of a chance opportunity.

"*August 3rd.*—Thank you a thousand times for all the love displayed in so many little ways. The chickens are to be caught at roost to-night. I hope they will prove fine—they must be tender. Mrs. Smith says the lemons will be greedily received on board, though I thought we were largely supplied by Mrs. Heathcote.

"Mr. Feilden and my brother left me plenty of work

to-day. One task is to pack a great box that is to be left behind ; the other is to copy a plan of his farm, which he has been reducing to a small scale. I had, besides, all the little arrangements, and divisions, and bestowments to make of sundry stores we leave behind, which may well be made useful during our absence. The Smiths are certainly indefatigable in helping us in every way. Yesterday morning poor Smith's face was white with excitement and pleasure, as he presented us with some birds ready for stuffing.

"Mrs. Galliers said good-bye as if I was going away for a week, and wished me a pleasant voyage.

"Mr. Feilden is at the vessel to-day. The wind has got up and is favourable for taking it out of harbour. I am anxious the mail should come in first. I feel stupefied to-day. Mr. Kock came to say good-bye yesterday. He intends going to the Umhlali to-morrow if the mail is in ; he has a horse to run !

"Thank you for your 'first rose ;' it is beautiful. I keep your books for the chance of reading to the end, but business must come first. Farewell, my dearest and most intimate and loved friend in Natal ! May God bless and keep you in peace and comfort, and direct both your movements and ours. We must pray for each other. Ever your affectionate friend,

"E. W. FEILDEN."

A note in Mrs. Bowen's writing attached to this letter, on its return to me after the dear old lady's death at eighty-three years of age, says :—

"Received the 3rd, and on the 4th they went on board the *Jane Morice*, not being able to call again ; but Mr. Feilden did most kindly on the 4th, on his way to go on board. Ah ! it is a bereavement to me. Kindly Mr. Kennedy came with him. "M. B."

CHAPTER XXXV.

August 5th.—Here we are fairly on board our old friend the *Jane Morice*, in our old cabins, to obtain which the two mates had to turn out, much to their annoyance. But we all seem friendly now, so they are reconciled by a smile and a civil word. Thus we shall not require to go downstairs at all, except during meal-times. Our cabin being above, is not only more airy, light, and cheerful, but there are no stairs.

I think all Durban turned out to wish us *bon voyage*. The cart had frequently to stop, and the gentlemen soon found out who were in it. Mr. Dacomb came out to say good-bye; he looked so goodnatured that I called him back to tell him I had heard of his kind attention to my friend Mrs. Bowen, and how pleased she had been with it. His rosy face beamed with pleasure as I spoke. The Rev. Mr. Lloyd gave us his blessing; he has a kindly heart. The Rev. Mr. Crompton rode up and shook hands. Our cart was covered, so that my sister-in-law, myself, and Mrs. Smith (its inmates) were not exposed to view, but our outriders proclaimed us. Mr. Kock, Mr. Proudfoot, Mr. Woolley, Mr. ——, oh! I don't know all who escorted us on board, where we had a capital picnic dinner, some from the ship's stores, but chiefly what we had brought on purpose. In the evening Captain Proudfoot came on board, and made us a very pleasant friendly call, accompanied by the captain of the *Lady of the Lake*.

Our vessel is being laden with wool at Algoa Bay, the deck is covered with bales. This morning, with my husband's aid, I climbed on the top and sat on a beam

across the vessel, watching the gulls sitting so comfortably on the water, or flying over and dipping down to see what was in the empty bottles that had been thrown overboard, and were still afloat. We have had our luncheon off cheese and ship-biscuit, improved by a box of sardines and a beautiful roll of bread we had left at breakfast, washing all down with a bottle of porter. Our little barque seems only large enough for ourselves; I cannot imagine how the bishop with his large party, and Mr. and Mrs. Lamport, could manage with any degree of comfort.

One day I asked the captain if he could give me something to do, whereupon the mate said the British flag wanted mending, so I mended the flag, and was glad to fancy myself a little useful. It gave me about two hours' good work. Leyland has turned bird-cage maker. The mate has two canaries; one cage was broken, so my husband mended it for him with a bit of wire I produced from my basket, and finding it suitable ship-board work, he bought some wire on shore, and is to exercise his genius in making cages. He has already completed one very nicely, and has engaged a man to bring him some birds.

I was ill yesterday, having one of those unaccountable fits just after I had dressed; it hung about me all day, but I am well again. When I became partly conscious, I saw my husband standing anxious beside me, making me swallow something, and the captain's anxious face peeping in from the curtain that shut our cabin from the rest of the vessel. He was a kind-hearted, easy-going Yankee, not over particular in dress or manners.

August 22nd.—Here we are, still in Algoa Bay, and likely to be here still ten days or a fortnight. Though we are very well off, and may be thankful, still ours is not an enviable position compared with that of those who possess a comfortable home on *terra firma*. The men are busy packing the vessel with wool. I was down in the hold yesterday to watch the pressing operation, and beguiled part of the day with fishing over the end of the vessel; but our lines were not good, and they

broke in bringing up the best fish. We saw plenty of mullet dancing about the bait, and nibbling it off very skilfully without taking the hook in. We mended our lines, however; for we supplied the table with good fresh fish during the whole five weeks we were in Algoa Bay, besides salting a quantity of mullet for the voyage. It was my luck to catch the first fish. I raised a shout of delight to bring my husband to witness my triumph, but what was my horror when I landed it on deck to see it swell out, as if it was an india-rubber ball! It was a toadfish, and poisonous.

On Sunday the shore signal to vessels in harbour was "prepare for bad weather." The gulls were sitting lovingly on the heaving waves, but the wind began to blow and the ship to rock at anchor like a cradle. I believe it rocked me to sleep, for I enjoyed a thoroughly good night's rest. The town looked even pretty and picturesque when I came on board in the morning. It was raining, which softened the landscape, while the early morning coloured the town. The Donkin monument stood marked out in the sky like a clumsy, but picturesque pyramid. I never see it without feeling that the architect stopped its growth at half its height. The first day of our arrival I actually mistook it for a soldier's tent erected on the hill; but, doubtless, the feelings that raised Lady Elizabeth Donkin's monument were those of deep affection and are to be respected.

The storm-signals had been right; the commotion in the bay was tremendous. I think we lost an anchor, but the mate told me we had fared better than most of our neighbours. One vessel was driving about, having broken from two anchors, while our small vessel had pitched up and down with the waves, and so was spared by not resisting. He said there was scarcely a vessel that was not loosened; and I had slept through it all.

There is a heavy surf on this coast, so that common boats cannot land without a wetting. A kind of ferry whale-boat plies between vessels and the shore, and must make a good thing of it, as the hire for the first time of landing and back costs 1*l*. No boat could leave

the shore yesterday, consequently the wool-packing went on badly. The rain, however, has calmed the sea, and the stevedore came on board this morning, and very politely rolled four oranges towards me over the table in the saloon. Last week three of the sailors each gave me one, which I fancy came on board the same way; it was nice in them.

The wool-packing is a much more laborious business than I had any idea of, it is quite a business of itself. The stevedore brings his screws, logs, &c., and the sailors work under him. The cumbrous bales are rolled into their appointed places by means of tugs, with hooks and pushes, heaves and pulls; then boards are placed between in which, with logs they call "Sampsons," great screws are inserted. As the bulk is compressed larger screws are admitted, and it takes a man's strength or more, to turn the screws by means of iron bars. When fairly lodged, pulleys are worked to draw out the boards, which the sailors effect as if they were setting the sails, singing to keep their pull in time.

A vessel close beside us is being taken to pieces; it is condemned as having sprung a leak—a showy vessel, called *The Exhibition*. It is only five years old, and they tell me it is all worm-eaten. When she is quite dismantled, they talk of running her in shore to form part of a breakwater or pier, which the inhabitants are beginning to think necessary. I should have thought it so long ago.

Port Elizabeth has more than trebled its size since my husband was there six years ago. The warehouses and buildings are of stone, there are two handsome-looking churches, for a colony, and everything has the air of doing well in a commercial way. But the place looks bare, and there are no banana or papaw-trees giving that peculiarly attractive warm look to a place. It looks a seaside mercantile town, and nothing more.

August 31*st*.—"I hope, my dear Mrs. Bowen, that you are gaining the victory over your troubles, and if you want any one to tell them to, as you used to tell me, take a sheet of paper, write a little at a time, and fancy

you have sent it to me, and when the mail leaves, your sheet, by that time well filled, can follow me. Your letters will always find a welcome, as I have ever found them full of interest, information, anecdote, and originality. I wish I had your power; I would then amuse myself by writing a book, and I tell my husband I would call my book 'Influence.' I would depict its power in every variety of form, from the gentlest to the most powerful, from the expression on the face to the force of practical deeds. But my good man gives me a hint to be quick with my letter; the steam is getting up, and as my steam has hardly done that yet, I fear my performance will be but sorry.

"I must not omit to tell you that we are as comfortable and content with our situation as the nature of it permits, and that we pass our time without much *ennui;* reading, working, fishing, carpentering, and, last but not least of our entertainments, eating. Meal-time is quite a resource on ship-board; it cannot come much too often; not that we are hungry—our breakfast is too substantial for that—but it forms a pleasant variety. When you come to England, be sure to take on board a bit of *cheese* you like, for, though there may be plenty of food, the beef and mutton are so tough that you will never be able to eat a mouthful of it, unless you have a better cook and better meat than we have here. It is not half so good as Natal beef and mutton, and they were tough enough.—Yours, &c., "E. W. F."

October 8th.—South Atlantic Ocean, 10° 12′ S., 10° 48′ W. On board the *Jane Morice.*

I am averse to writing here, there is no comfort in it; the position crooked (owing to the glass sides of the table), the ink bad, and the top of the table continually required, either for eating or to give air to the cabin below. In many ways we are well off; but the *Jane Morice* should never have taken charge of us home, had we known of the bugs which swarm, of the mate's unpleasant, vulgar behaviour, or of five long weeks' detention in Algoa Bay, through an uncompleted cargo. The captain is a goodnatured under-bred Yankee, who wishes

to make our voyage pleasant. Mr. Gavin, the only other cabin passenger, if not particularly polished, is not offensive, except in the matter of spitting, in which the captain is an adept. In the evenings the cabin is lighted by a large, ill-constructed oil lamp, hanging from the ceiling to make darkness visible. It is next to impossible either to read or sew by its light. For some time we went to bed as soon as tea was over, and Mr. Feilden would read by the light of his own lamp a good part of the night, while I learned to sleep ten hours out of the twenty-four; but, after we sailed from Algoa Bay, the captain brought out a pack of very greasy cards, and asked if we had any objection to taking a hand at whist? Though neither of us cares for the game, there were several things to be considered. First, these two men had no way of amusing themselves, and might bring in two others from the other end of the vessel to make up their table, while sundry other little reasons induced us both without consultation to accept the offer, provided that there were no stakes. They were quite happy, and so the cards came out nightly. We have a merry rubber, in which we contend for the winning quite eagerly, and, as there is no risk, it serves to keep all in good humour, and does not wear out our sight trying to see to read; also, it helps to pass the evening till eight or nine o'clock, when we retire to our cabin.

There are other disagreeables besides those I have named, and one in particular. Some hides were put on board as freight, which breed innumerable flies that are a constant torture. Everything we eat or drink gets covered with them. Leyland has done what he can to diminish their number, and has set decanters with the dregs of wine or beer in to catch them. It is a curiosity to see the decanter half full of the drunken, drowned flies. These he gives to his chickens, of which he has four pets, and also a white Chinese hen. We sweep down hundreds of flies besides, and every now and then Leyland holds what he calls an *auto-da-fé* in the morning, brushing down thousands from the sides of the cabin. All these little things are great annoyances,

and require great patience; the disgust we cannot help. We are in our tenth week on board, and are only two days' sail past St. Helena! We have come well on the whole, for the five weeks' idleness in Algoa Bay must be deducted.

We passed very close to St. Helena, but it was night, and the moon was considerably obscured by clouds; still I saw the fatal rock, and in the gloom of evening it did look a dismal place to pass one's life upon. For a moment, we thought we were going to pay an involuntary visit at St. Helena, and I thought of Bonaparte; but I believe it was our ignorance and the deception of the mist, which made us think we were driving on the island. For a moment we each experienced a sensation I need not describe. We were going very fast with the wind strong for the rock, but I believe the captain knew he had time to alter the course of the vessel.

We have been running a sort of friendly race with the brig *Shepherdess,* which left Algoa Bay the day after we did. She is the quicker sailer, and I believe a better built boat. She has twice passed us, once so close that we spoke. Now we are the first, for she put in at St. Helena. The first time we passed her she was becalmed, so it is the story of the hare and the tortoise; the hare goes to sleep while the tortoise moves steadily on.

October 13th.—Darkness obliged me to put away my desk, and until now I have not had resolution enough to write again. The heat during the last few days has been intense, and laziness the consequence, but we are sailing famously now in the trade winds, about 150 miles daily. Ah! how much does that sound in these days of steam? We catch the flying fish and the little shells called "Portuguese men-of-war," floating so gracefully, and there are Mother Cary's chickens. The other day we saw a great whale sporting, and this morning, before sunrise, the steward brought a flying fish to our cabin. I chanced to be awake, so I crossed to my husband's side of the cabin to learn the cause of the steward's early visit, and saw a can of water, but the fish had flown

away. After a hunt it was secured, and I was pleased to examine the little thing for a few moments, so elegant and light upon the water.

We commence our eleventh week at sea. Two or three days ago we passed Ascension Isle. We have seen a good many vessels, which is cheerful. The heat has made Mr. Feilden very weak ; he is patient and cheerful, but weary of the vessel, and we hope soon to be on land again.

November 27th.—Still battling about, going the wrong way. The captain is losing all patience with the wind, and we all begin to grow restless. . . .

We were just eighteen weeks on board, from the 5th of August. Our friends in England had been very anxious, and feared that something had gone wrong with the vessel. During one fortnight we made scarcely any way, but tossed about, trying to get between the Azore Islands, I believe. I have not kept a note of the date of our landing. It must have been the first week in December, 1857. Provisions of various kinds were running short, the salt was finished, the tea was finished, and, worst of all, the lamp went out for lack of oil. A fog was on the English Channel, and castor-oil had to be burned in the lamp tied to the mast-head. We sat in the cabin very nearly in darkness. At last, however, we landed in England, and my feelings were such when I entered an hotel that I could scarcely resist embracing the chamber-maid, Leyland feeling the same impulse towards the men in the yard, who assembled round him like a raree show. I dare say we were strange, uncouth-looking objects ; I felt as such, when stepping into a first-class carriage on the rail for London, I confronted a dapper, little, well-dressed, business-looking gentleman, with a brilliant diamond ring on his little finger. I compared my old, ugly, sea-worn woollen cloak with his fashionable clothes, and no longer wondered at his look of surprise.

A dense, yellow fog reigned in London as we drove through on our way to Streatham. The streets seemed nearly deserted ; but the first lady I saw walking had her

dress tucked up, and a scarlet and black woollen skirt below. Fashion had wholly changed to allow of such an under-garment since last I was in London. I soon discovered that, with all my care in Natal to provide suitable clothing for my first arrival, I was indeed quite out of fashion. Hoops were worn, and each lady measured about three yards round, with her dress sweeping the floor. One of the first things I was told was that I did not wear a sufficient number of skirts, and truly this English climate admits of the wearing of several. We have both taken cold by the change of climate.

These reminiscences of my "African Home" are at an end. I need not say how kindly we were welcomed by both my own family and my husband's, nor how long we trespassed on their hospitality, which never seemed to weary.

We never returned to Natal, but I kept up a correspondence with my dear old friend, Mrs. Bowen, who lived to the age of eighty-three.

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